Donald Judd

Complete Writings 1959-1975

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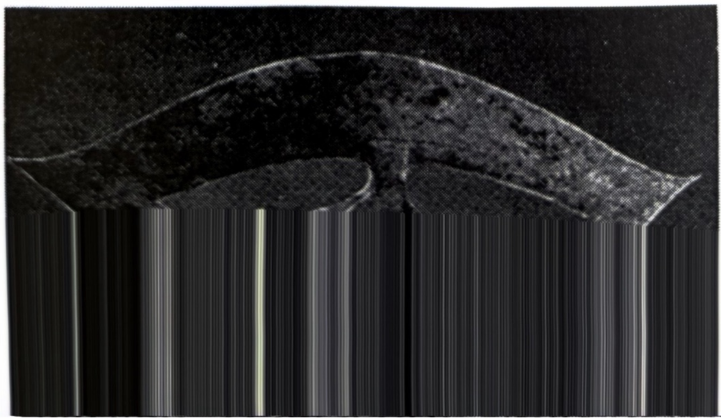
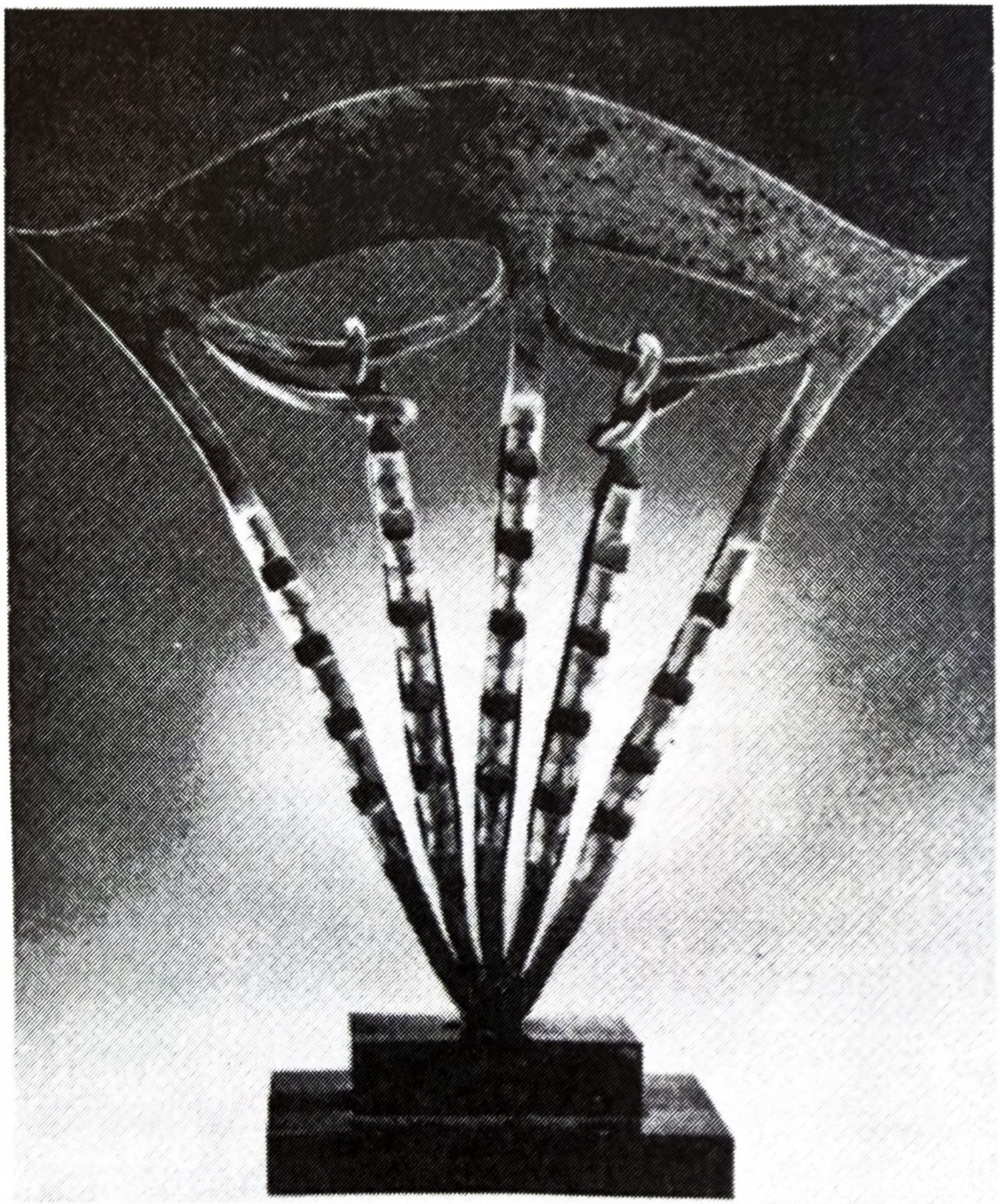
but unfortunately are placed on an airy depth of brushwork. (Galerie En-Bas, Apr. 26-May 17.)

"In the Galleries"

Arts, June 1960

Yoruba Sculpture: Spirits wishing corporeality cause themselves to be born as twins among the Yoruba of Nigeria. With this advance status twins are considered a fortunate advent for any household. Small wooden figures, called Ibeji, are carved to symbolize the twins' eminence, to represent them in ceremonies, and, if one has died, to signify, by placing the figure on the family altar, that his return will be welcomed. The Ibeji, which are naturalistic, are rather diverse within the simple standing pose. The arms, for example, vary widely: one elephantine set includes and arches from the pectoral muscles; a pair hangs straight from high shoulders: two form a rounded rectangle enclosing the chest of the one twin and the breasts of the other; and another pair similarly describes a near oval. Vestiges of camwood, which is red, and indigo, colors applied for festivals, still remain. The Ibeji are not especially unusual or dramatic, but they are discerningly carved. (Delacorte, May 9-31.)





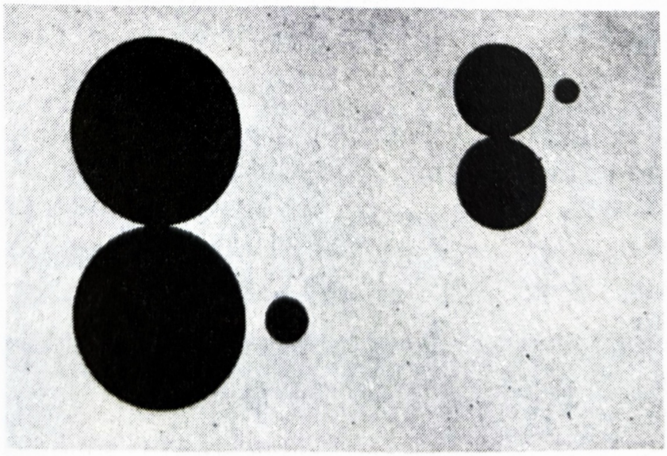
Ax Blade, ***Central Belgian Congo***

Primitive Art from the Lipchitz Collection: The display last fall of Jacques Lipchitz's sculpture was entitled "Encounters," a word or idea which has apparently acquired considerable resonance for him, since it appears again as salient in the fine foreword he has written to this exhibition. A sculpture is found to resemble others, frequently remote (for example similarities obtain at the beginning and end of most cycles), and this resemblance indicates the universality of certain technical devices and implies that of mental processes. The "encounter" is the observer's recognition of the resemblance, a recognition that is a further creation, an exercise of his human propensity for correlation, and this recognition of a fundamental artistic kinship is added to the irreducible and unexpandable meaning of each particular work of art. The Renaissance was the first period to extend its idealism horizontally, to acknowledge the value of a much earlier civilization, instead of solipsistically admiring the local mythology. With difficulty, this mode of understanding has become more inclusive, and, with more knowledge, less idealistic, until now it has been extended to all known cultures. Both directly and indirectly the accumulation of past or alien art has influenced that of the twentieth century, Lipchitz's included — for, as he says, "I had always in my mind that I was collecting for learning." Lipchitz is uninterested in systematic collecting; his pieces range from minor to major and represent many phases of culture and history. One of the oldest is a bronze crossbow mechanism of the Han dynasty, contemporaneous with Rome, where the invention was unknown. One of the finest—and the finest is a fairly large class in this exhibition—is an iron ax-blade made by the Basonge of the Central Belgian Congo. The blade is not solid but opened into five ribs, notched and decorated with faces, which flare from a point to a long and graceful edge, whose curve resembles the moderate one of early Greek art. The flared shape suggests its innumerable occurrences in that art, and particularly their prototype, the double-ax of Crete. A door key from the Cameroons is one of the few pieces which might be thought to have a connection with Lipchitz's sculpture. The handle is a roundish piece of wood from which three massive S-shapes have been isolated. There are also excellent African masks and a bronze mask from Tibet. (Museum of Primitive Art, May 18-Sept. 11).

Nicol Allan: The "Images of Man" in Allan's personal Miserere are dissolved [illegible] or darkness; everything [illegible]

. Light purple and blue out-match yellow, orange and red. As Still's initial sensation is, in part, of dry heat, cold in that context is novel and with potential. (Radich, Mar. 22–Apr. 16.)

Alexander Liberman: Liberman's ancestors are remote: Mondrian's color is narrowly adjusted, his white resonant and spatially double; Alber's diverse and lambent color exceeds its schematic intervals and square format. There is nothing transcendent over objective conditions in most of these paintings. The major exception is an eighty-inch tondo, *Continuous on Red,* in which two central, symmetrical and highly stable circles of a slightly granular cobalt blue are set to revolving within the red field by small black disks, one above the right circle, and one below the other. The economy is admirable. *Minimum* is representative of the majority: the fine, white line of a circumference is neatly inscribed in a black enameled square. It is handsome, but so are the parabolas and hyperbolas of geometry. (Parsons, Apr. 4–23.)



Alexander Liberman, *Afterimage*

Sarah Berman: In her youth Sarah Berman came to this country from the Ukraine, and, isolated, quietly painted until

"Books"

Arts Magazine, November 1963

Interaction of Color
by Josef Albers
Yale University Press
$200

Interaction of Color is primarily pedagogical. It gives a general idea of what is known about color, but it is not an encyclopedia of color information. If only the simple existence of the information is considered, there isn't anything new. Most of it and more is in M. E. Chevreul's famous and influential book, published in 1838, which was important to the Impressionists and then to Delaunay and Kupka. The book's information is again important, though not through the original work, since it is hard to obtain, but through Albers and painting generally. The book was reprinted a number of times and should be again, preferably cheaply. In addition to Chevreul's information and some that is generally current in painting, Albers briefly discusses and shows the color effects and sequences of the Bezold Effect, the Weber-Fechner Law, the Goethe Triangle, the Munsell and the Ostwald color systems and the automatic spectrophotometer.

There are three parts to the *Interaction of Color,* well-boxed, as they should be for the price. A hard-backed volume is called the text and a paper-backed one is the commentary. The commentary applies to eighty-one folders containing two hundred or so color studies. The text, which also deals specifically with the various phenomena, is concerned with color in art and with teaching color so that it is learned creatively and used that way.

The color studies, most of which are printed by silk screen and some by four-color separation and photo offset, are often spectacular and often entertaining. They are obviously the reason for the price of the book. At that price it is an institutional possession. It wouldn't have helped much, but the six folders of leaf studies and a few of the thirteen folders of free studies, done by students, as most of the studies are —Albers did a few—could have been left out. In folder IV-1, Albers shows that one color can look like two colors, that a color can be enormously changed by the color around it: an olive-gray rectangle on a magenta ground looks considerably lighter than the same olive gray on a light-green ground. On the facing page an orangish-tan square on a cerulean field connects not to the identical tan square across from it on an orange field, but to the orange field itself. The tan on the orange appears darker than the tan on the cerulean. One page of folder VII-1 has two adjacent rectangles of lightened orange and lightened purple, each containing a bar of tan whose small difference seems to be explained by their different grounds; they might be identical. A tab along the edge conceals the real relation of the bars, shown adjacently. They are wildly divergent, considerably orange and purple themselves. Albers calls this group of studies color subtraction. Two different colors are made to seem the same or four colors are made to appear three. The study is incredible. VIII-1 shows an afterimage. Both pages of the folder are black. One side contains a large red circle and the other a matching white one. When you look at the white circle after staring at the red one, it flushes a light, intense cerulean blue. There are a lot of these studies, and many are more complicated than the ones just described. The studies show the color effects clearly and simply. Albers' explanations are clear as well. Chevreul's book shows how dense the subject can be, though necessarily so in that case. Albers' approach is practical and sensible and free of cant and obscurities.

Albers says, with regard to one study, "We study this first, not as a surprising or entertaining illusion but to make eyes and mind aware of the wonders of color interaction; second, to learn to utilize color deception in creative color performance." "The book *Interaction of Color* is a record of an experimental way of studying color and of teaching color." The book makes, to put it simply, one unqualified point, that color is important in art. It does this very well. Of course the book is also showing a particular way, contemporary now, in which color is important. Most of the studies would have been only entertaining illusions a few decades ago. The plain fact of color in art, the specific use of these effects in art, which is contemporary, and Albers' experimental way of teaching color are the real contributions of the book. Albers' remarks are original, not about the simple existence of an effect, but about how it works in art. The experimental way is also original and is fine. Albers' way of teaching has been and should be very useful. It is hardly irrelevant that he is an exceptional painter.

The beginning is an instance of Albers' teaching. Albers wants to emphasize that "Color is the most relative medium in art." A color can be made to look different. The class is shown examples of this. "Then the class is invited to produce similar effects but is not given reasons or favorable conditions. It starts, therefore, on a trial-and-error basis." This is nice. The class could have been given an explanation, never become involved in the relativity of color and probably have forgotten it the next day. They would certainly have forgotten it when they began to paint.

The information taught to art students is even more relative than color. It is highly circumstantial and transitory. But at any one time, specific knowledge of some kind is necessary. Usually, though, it is being formed at the same time that it is necessary. Techniques and information are vital if there is an artistic use for them and completely useless if there isn't. Albers' information is relevant right now. There is an increasing use of optical and color phenomena. However, as Albers must know, since he presents the knowledge generally and undogmatically, there is more to color right now than he shows, and color can be expected to be very different in twenty years or so. Albers is teaching what he knows, most of which comes from his painting. This is all anyone can do in regard to technical knowledge. The method shows that Albers allows for the rest. A discussion of color wouldn't be any more comprehensive or objective if it were by someone not a painter. Albers' particular view of color is indicated by a qualification to a harsh study in black and yellow: "Despite its lack of an harmonious or pleasant appeal . . ." He goes on to say it is useful anyway. The *Interaction of Color* is the best that can be done. It is just that it has all the Biblical possibilities, since it is clear and has limits, of anatomy or of the other subjects whose presence and perfection are supposed to define art. The book should be used but not that way.

these verbal ones, are about this situation. Other generalizations and much of the specificity are assertions of my own interests and those that have settled in the public domain.

Arts Yearbook 8, 1965

Specific Objects

Half or more of the best new work in the last few years has been neither painting nor sculpture. Usually it has been related, closely or distantly, to one or the other. The work is diverse, and much in it that is not in painting and sculpture is also diverse. But there are some things that occur nearly in common.

The new three-dimensional work doesn't constitute a movement, school or style. The common aspects are too general and too little common to define a movement. The differences are greater than the similarities. The similarities are selected from the work; they aren't a movement's first principles or delimiting rules. Three-dimensionality is not as near being simply a container as painting and sculpture have seemed to be, but it tends to that. But now painting and sculpture are less neutral, less containers, more defined, not undeniable and unavoidable. They are particular forms circumscribed after all, producing fairly definite qualities. Much of the motivation in the new work is to get clear of these forms. The use of three dimensions is an obvious alternative. It opens to anything. Many of the reasons for this use are negative points against painting and sculpture, and since both are common sources, the negative reasons are those nearest commonage. "The motive to change is always some uneasiness: nothing setting us upon the change of state, or upon any new action, but some uneasiness." The positive reasons are more particular. Another reason for listing the insufficiencies of painting and sculpture first is that both are familiar and their elements and qualities more easily located.

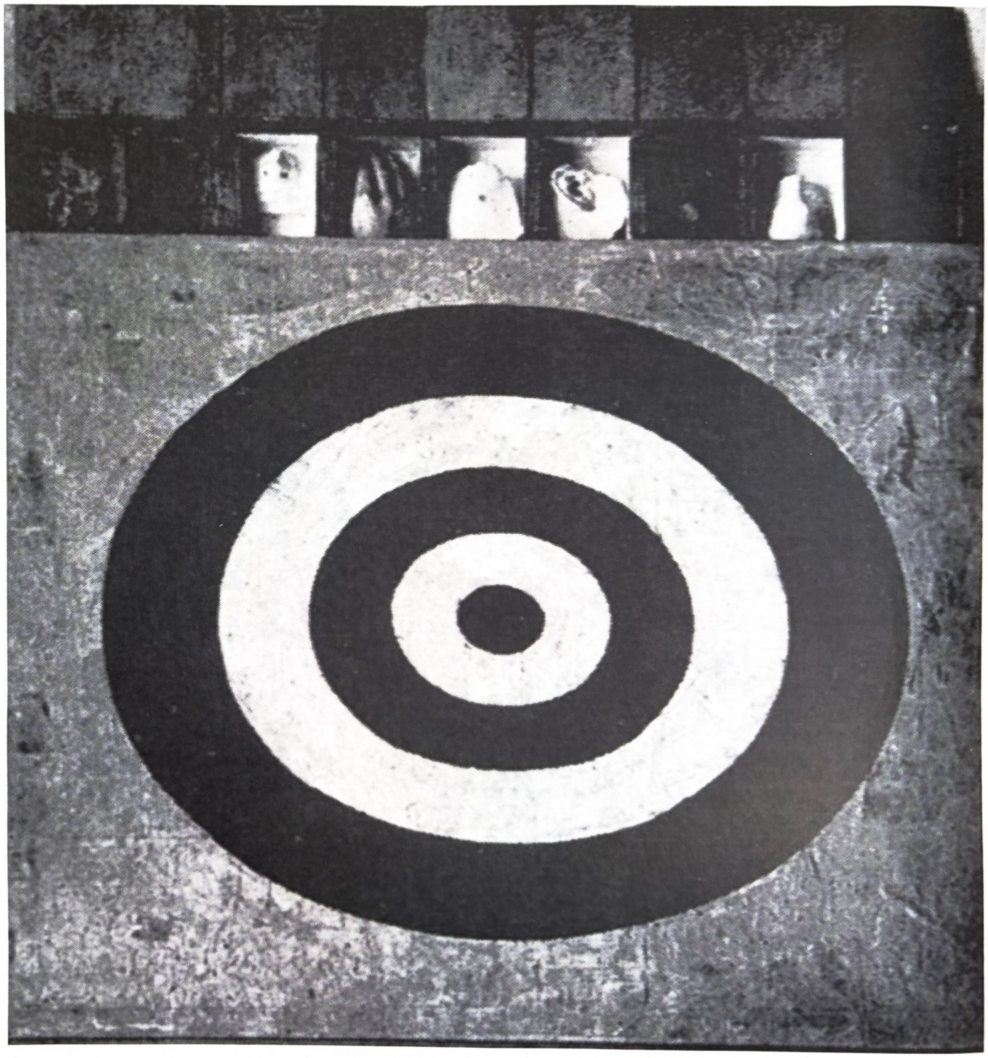
The objections to painting and sculpture are going to sound more intolerant than they are. There are qualifications. The disinterest in painting and sculpture is a disinterest in doing it again, not in it as it is being done by those who developed the last advanced versions. New work always involves objections to the old, but these objections are really relevant only to the new. They are part of it. If the earlier work is first-rate it is complete. New inconsistencies and limitations aren't retroactive; they concern only work that is being developed. Obviously, three-dimensional work will not cleanly succeed painting and sculpture. It's not like a movement; anyway, movements no longer work; also, linear history has unraveled somewhat. The new work exceeds painting in plain power, but power isn't the only consideration, though the difference between it and expression can't be too great either. There are other ways than power and form in which one kind of art can be more or less than another. Finally, a flat and rectangular surface is too handy to give up. Some things can be done only on a flat surface. Lichtenstein's representation of a representation is a good instance. But this work which is neither painting nor sculpture challenges both. It will have to be taken into account by new artists. It will probably change painting and sculpture.

The main thing wrong with painting is that it is a rectangular plane placed flat against the wall. A rectangle is a shape itself; it is obviously the whole shape; it determines and limits the arrangement of whatever is on or inside of it. In work before 1946 the edges of the rectangle are a boundary, the end of the picture. The composition must react to the edges and the rectangle must be unified, but the shape of the rectangle is not stressed; the parts are more important, and the relationships of color and form occur among them. In the paintings of Pollock, Rothko, Still and Newman, and more recently of Reinhardt and Noland, the rectangle is emphasized. The elements inside the rectangle are broad and simple and correspond closely to the rectangle. The shapes and surface are only those which can occur plausibly within and on a rectangular plane. The parts are few and so subordinate to the unity as not to be parts in an ordinary sense. A painting is nearly an entity, one thing, and not the indefinable sum of a group of entities and references. The one thing overpowers the earlier painting. It also establishes the rectangle as a definite form; it is no longer a fairly neutral limit. A form can be used only in so many ways. The rectangular plane is given a life span. The simplicity required to emphasize the rectangle limits the arrangements possible within it. The sense of singleness also has a duration, but it is only beginning and has a better future outside of painting. Its occurrence in painting now looks like a beginning, in which new forms are often made from earlier schemes and materials.

The plane is also emphasized and nearly single. It is clearly a plane one or two inches in front of another plane, the wall, and parallel to it. The relationship of the two planes is specific; it is a form. Everything on or slightly in the plane of the painting must be arranged laterally.

Almost all paintings are spatial in one way or another. Yves Klein's blue paintings are the only ones that are unspatial, and there is little that is nearly unspatial, mainly Stella's work. It's possible that not much can be done with both an upright rectangular plane and an absence of space. Anything on a surface has space behind it. Two colors on the same surface almost always lie on different depths. An even color, especially in oil paint, covering all or much of a painting is almost always both flat and infinitely spatial. The space is shallow in all of the work in which the rectangular plane is stressed. Rothko's space is shallow and the soft rectangles are parallel to the plane, but the space is almost traditionally illusionistic. In Reinhardt's paintings, just back from the plane of the canvas, there is a flat plane and this seems in turn indefinitely deep. Pollock's paint is obviously on the canvas, and the space is mainly that made by any marks on a surface, so that it is not very descriptive and illusionistic. Noland's concentric bands are not as specifically paint-on-a-surface as Pollock's paint, but the bands flatten the literal space more. As flat and unillusionistic as Noland's paintings are, the bands do advance and recede. Even a single circle will warp the surface to it, will have a little space behind it.

Except for a complete and unvaried field of color or marks, anything spaced in a rectangle and on a plane suggests something in and on something else, something in its surround, which suggests an object or figure in its space, in which these are clearer instances of a similar world — that's the main purpose of painting. The recent paintings aren't completely single. There are a few dominant areas, Rothko's rectangles or Noland's circles, and there is the area around them. There is a gap between the main forms, the most



Jasper Johns, *Large Construction* (1955)

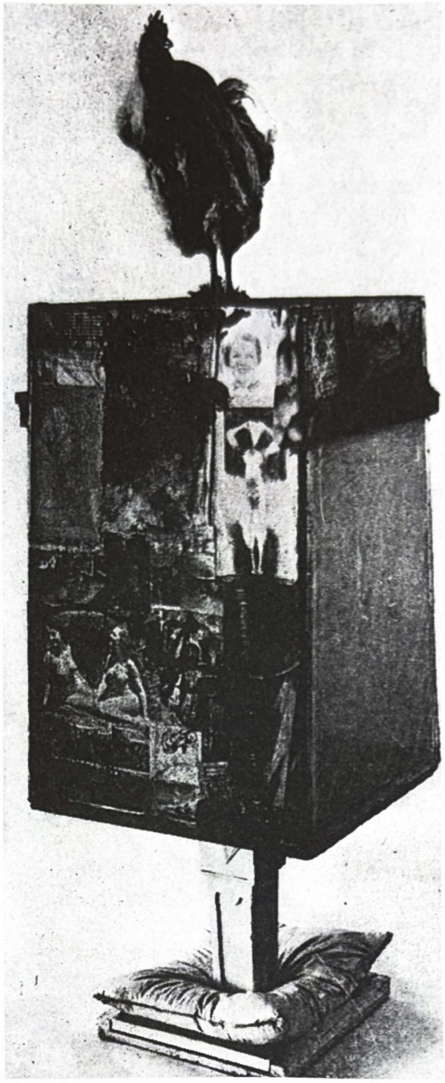
expressive parts, and the rest of the canvas, the plane and the rectangle. The central forms still occur in a wider and indefinite context, although the singleness of the paintings abridges the general and solipsistic quality of earlier work. Fields are also usually not limited, and they give the appearance of sections cut from something indefinitely larger.

Oil paint and canvas aren't as strong as commercial paints and as the colors and surfaces of materials, especially if the materials are used in three dimensions. Oil and canvas are familiar and, like the rectangular plane, have a certain quality and have limits. The quality is especially identified with art.

The new work obviously resembles sculpture more than it does painting, but it is nearer to painting. Most sculpture is like the painting which preceded Pollock, Rothko, Still and Newman. The newest thing about it is its broad scale. Its materials are somewhat more emphasized than before. The imagery involves a couple of salient resemblances to other visible things and a number of more oblique references, everything generalized to compatibility. The parts and the space are allusive, descriptive and somewhat naturalistic. Higgins' sculpture is an example, and, dissimilarly, Di Suvero's. Higgins' sculpture mainly suggests machines and truncated bodies. Its combination of plaster and metal is more specific. Di Suvero uses beams as if they were brush strokes, imitating movement, as Kline did. The material never has its own movement. A beam thrusts, a piece of iron follows a gesture; together they form a naturalistic and anthropomorphic image. The space corresponds.

Most sculpture is made part by part, by addition, composed. The main parts remain fairly discrete. They and the small parts are a collection of variations, slight through great. There are hierarchies of clarity and strength and of proximity to one or two main ideas. Wood and metal are the usual materials, either alone or together, and if together it is without much of a contrast. There is seldom any color. The middling contrast and the natural monochrome are general and help to unify the parts.

There is little of any of this in the new three-dimensional work. So far the most obvious difference within this diverse work is between that which is something of an object, a single thing, and that which is open and extended, more or less environmental. There isn't as great a difference in their nature as in their appearance, though. Oldenburg and others have done both. There are precedents for some of the characteristics of the new work. The parts are usually subordinate and not separate in Arp's sculpture and often in Brancusi's. Duchamp's ready-mades and other Dada objects are also seen at once and not part by part. Cornell's boxes have too many parts to seem at first to be structured. Part-by-part structure can't be too simple or too complicated. It has to seem orderly. The degree of Arp's abstraction, the moderate extent of his reference to the human body, neither imitative nor very oblique, is unlike the imagery of most of the new three-dimensional work. Duchamp's bottle-drying rack is close to some of it. The work of Johns and Rauschenberg and assemblage and low-relief generally, Ortman's reliefs for example, are preliminaries. Johns's few cast objects and a few of Rauschenberg's works, such as the goat with the tire, are beginnings.


Robert Rauschenberg, *Odalisk* (1955-58)

Some European paintings are related to objects, Klein's for instance, and Castellani's, which have unvaried fields of low-relief elements. Arman and a few others work in three dimensions. Dick Smith did some large pieces in London with canvas stretched over cockeyed parallelepiped frames and with the surfaces painted as if the pieces were paintings. Philip King, also in London, seems to be making objects. Some of the work on the West Coast seems to be along this line, that of Larry Bell, Kenneth Price, Tony Delap, Sven Lukin, Bruce Conner, Kienholz of course, and others. Some of the work in New York having some or most of the characteristics is that by George Brecht, Ronald Bladen, John Willenbecher, Ralph Ortiz, Anne Truitt, Paul Harris, Barry McDowell, John Chamberlain, Robert Tanner, Aaron Kuriloff, Robert Morris, Nathan Raisen, Tony Smith, Richard Navin, Claes Oldenburg, Robert Watts, Yoshimura, John Anderson, Harry Soviak, Yayoi Kusama, Frank Stella, Salvatore Scarpitta, Neil Williams, George Segal, Michael Snow, Richard Artschwager, Arakawa, Lucas Samaras, Lee Bontecou, Dan Flavin and Robert Whitman. H.C. Westermann works in Connecticut. Some of these artists do both three-dimensional work and paintings. A small amount of the work of others, Warhol and Rosenquist for instance, is three-dimensional.

The composition and imagery of Chamberlain's work is primarily the same as that of earlier painting, but these are secondary to an appearance of disorder and are at first concealed by the material. The crumpled tin tends to stay that way. It is neutral at first, not artistic, and later seems objective. When the structure and imagery become apparent, there seems to be too much tin and space, more chance and casualness than order. The aspects of neutrality, redundancy and form and imagery could not be coextensive without three dimensions and without the particular material. The color is also both netural and sensitive and, unlike oil colors, has a wide range. Most color that is integral, other than in painting, has been used in three-dimensional work. Color is never unimportant, as it usually is in sculpture.

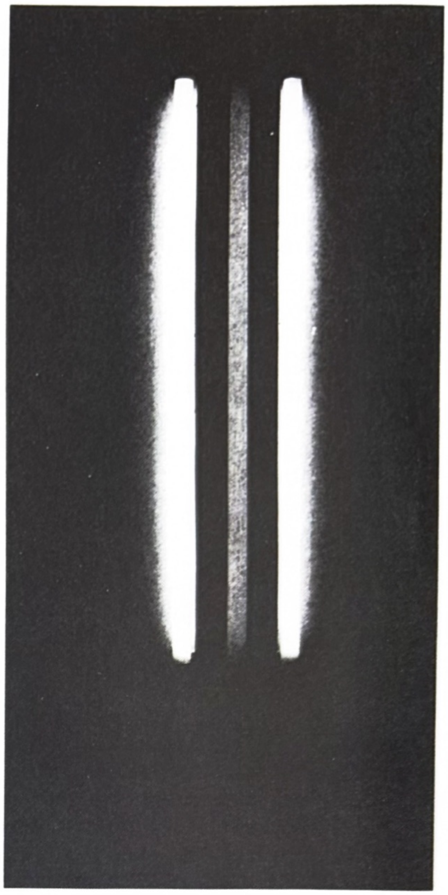
Stella's shaped paintings involve several important characteristics of three-dimensional work. The periphery of a piece and the lines inside correspond. The stripes are nowhere near being discrete parts.

The surface is farther from the wall than usual, though it remains parallel to it. Since the surface is exceptionally unified and involves little or no space, the parallel plane is unusually distinct. The order is not rationalistic and underlying but is simply order, like that of continuity, one thing after another. A painting isn't an image. The shapes, the unity, projection, order and color are specific, aggressive and powerful.

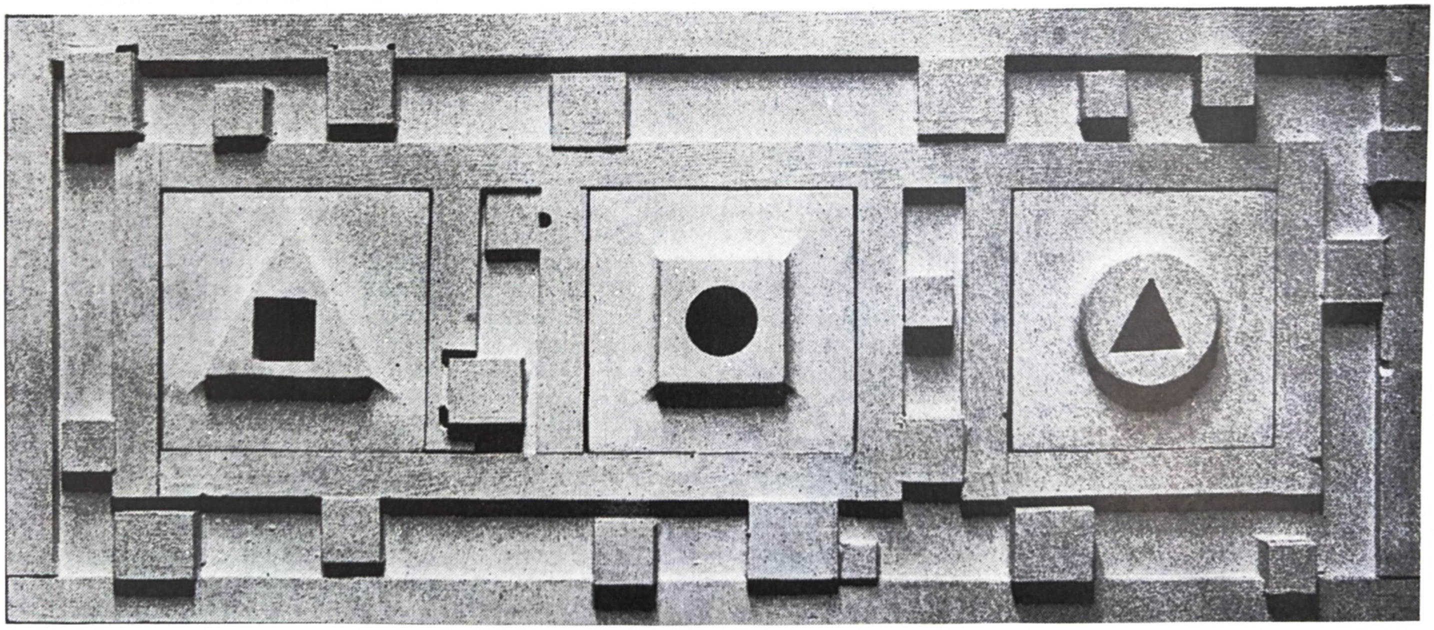
Painting and sculpture have become set forms. A fair amount of their meaning isn't credible. The use of three dimensions isn't the use of a given form. There hasn't been enough time and work to see limits. So far, considered most widely, three dimensions are mostly a space to move into. The characteristics of three dimensions are those of only a small amount of work, little compared to painting and sculpture. A few of the more general aspects may persist, such as the work's being like an object or being specific, but other characteristics are bound to develop. Since its range is so wide, three-dimensional work will probably divide into a number of forms. At any rate, it will be larger than painting and much larger than sculpture, which, compared to painting, is fairly particular, much nearer to what is usually called a form, having a certain kind of form. Because the nature of three dimensions isn't set, given beforehand, something credible can be made, almost anything. Of course something can be done within a given form, such as painting, but with some narrowness and less strength and variation. Since sculpture isn't so general a form, it can probably be only what it is now — which means that if it changes a great deal it will be something else; so it is finished.

Three dimensions are real space. That gets rid of the problem of illusionism and of literal space, space in and around marks and colors — which is riddance of one of the salient and most objectionable relics of European art. The several limits of painting are no longer present. A work can be as powerful as it can be thought to be. Actual space is intrinsically more powerful and specific than paint on a flat surface. Obviously, anything in three dimensions can be any shape, regular or irregular, and can have any relation to the wall, floor, ceiling, room, rooms or exterior or none at all. Any material can be used, as is or painted.

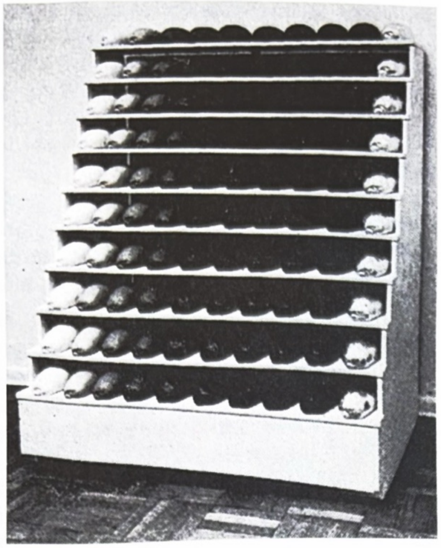
A work needs only to be interesting. Most works finally have one quality. In earlier art the complexity was displayed and built the quality. In recent painting the complexity was in the format and the few main shapes, which had been made according to various interests and problems. A painting by Newman is finally no simpler than one by Cézanne. In the three-dimensional work the whole thing is made according to complex purposes, and these are not scattered but asserted



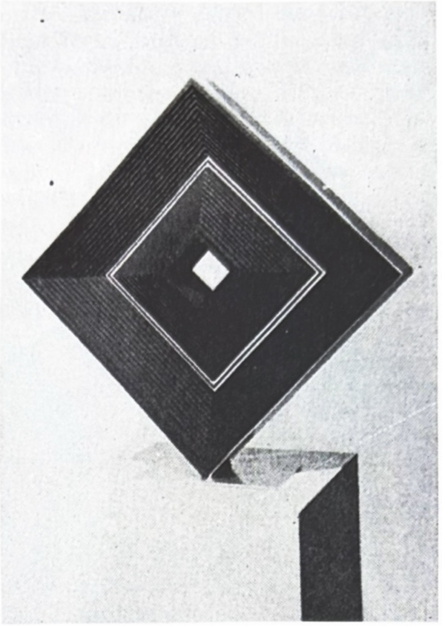
Dan Flavin, ***Three Fluorescent Tubes (Red and Gold)*** **(1963)**



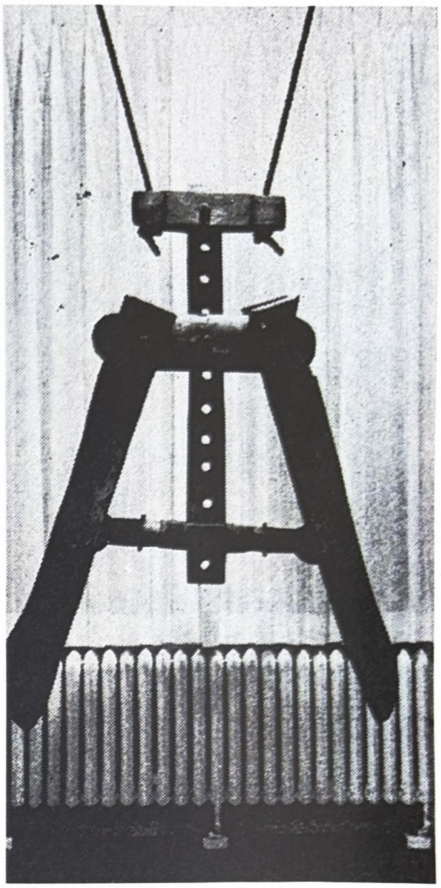
George Ortman, ***Stages of Life*** **(1956)**



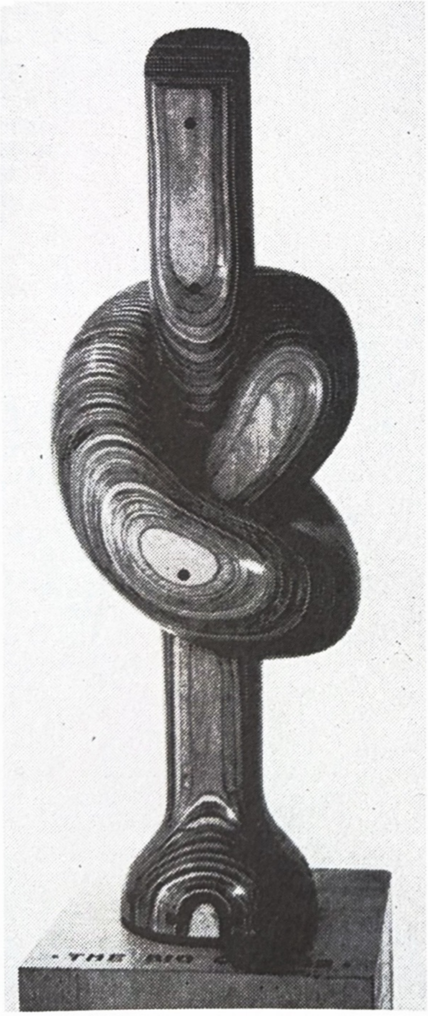
Robert Watts, *Untitled* (1964)



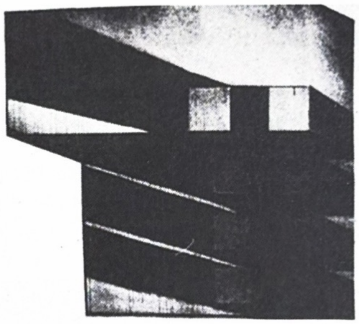
Tony Delap, *Lorna Doone* (1964)



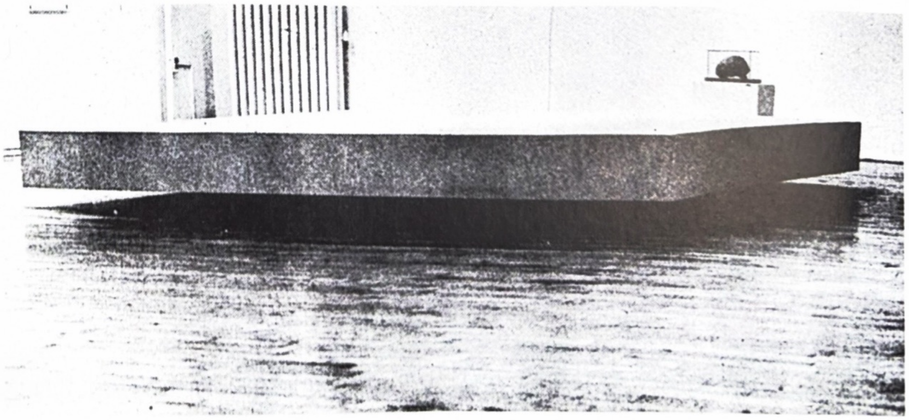
John Anderson, *Yoke* (1962)



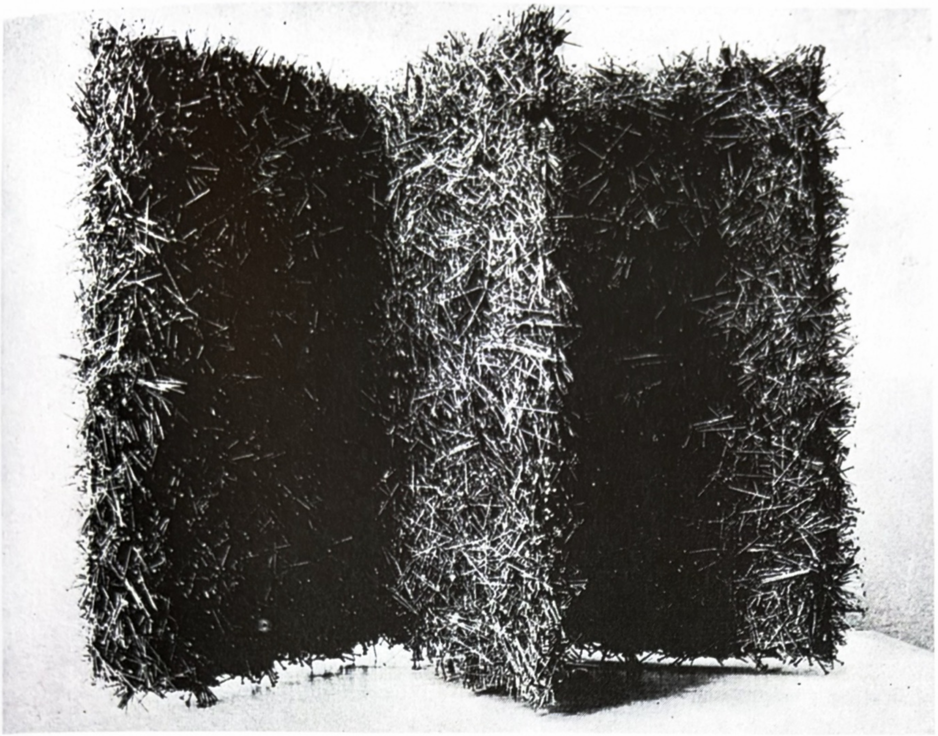
H. C. Westermann, *Untitled* (1964)



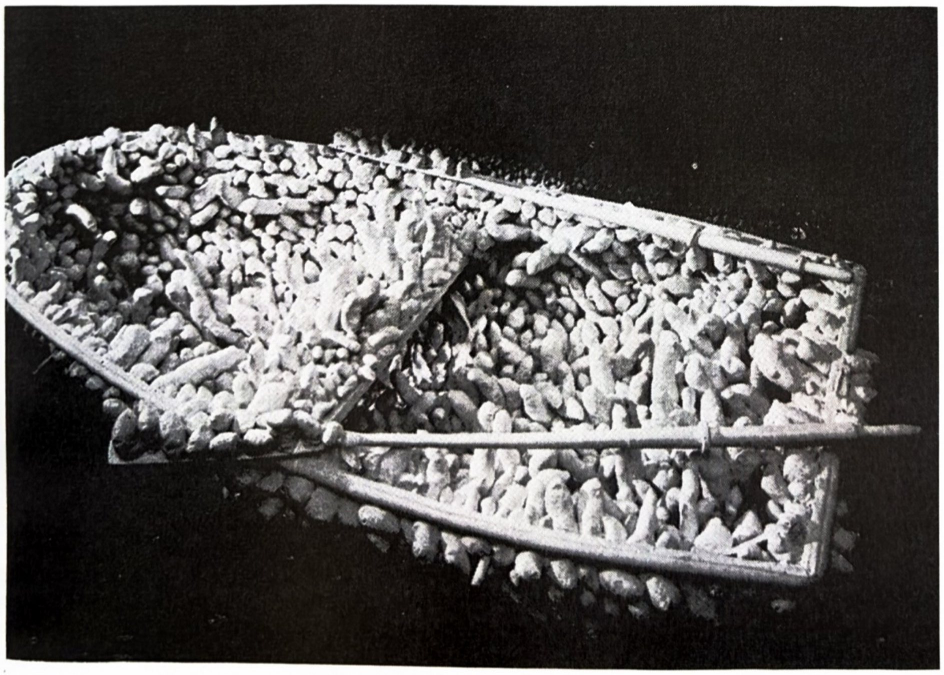
Richard Smith, *Quartet* (1964)



Robert Morris, *Slab* (1963)



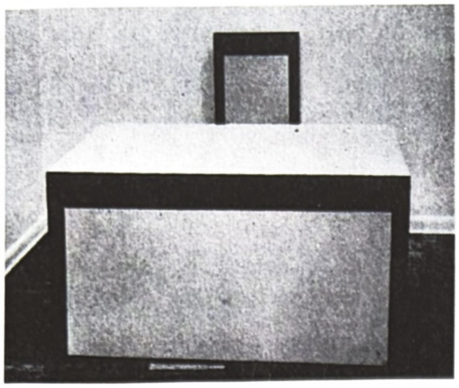
Samaras, ***Book No. 6 (Treasures of the Metropolitan)*** **(1962)**



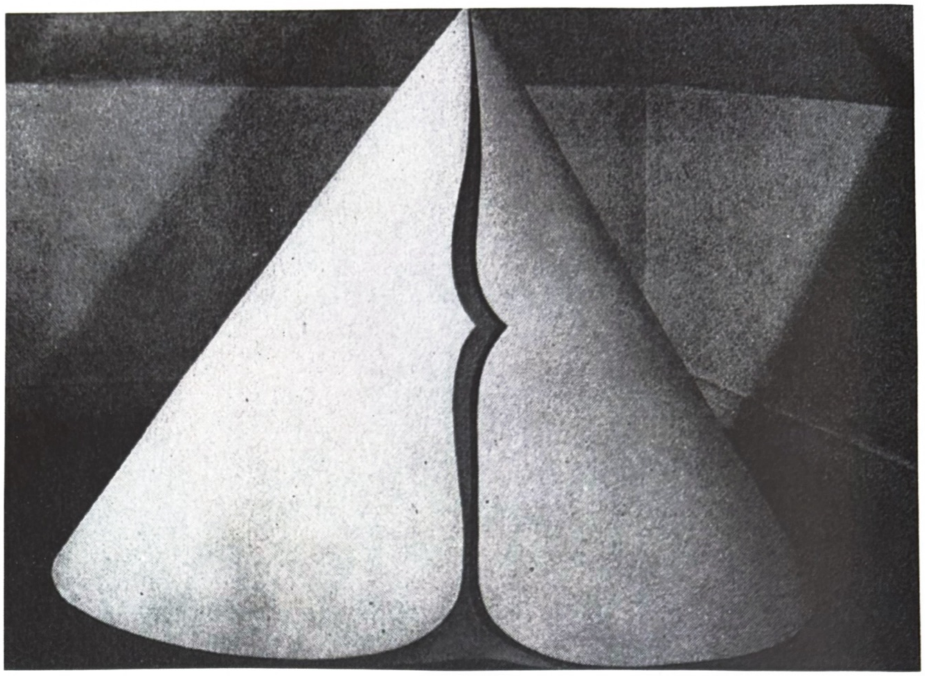
Yayoi Kusama, ***Boat Accumulation*** **(1962)**

by one form. It isn't necessary for a work to have a lot of things to look at, to compare, to analyze one by one, to contemplate. The thing as a whole, its quality as a whole, is what is interesting. The main things are alone and are more intense, clear and powerful. They are not diluted by an inherited format, variations of a form, mild contrasts and connecting parts and areas. European art had to represent a space and its contents as well as have sufficient unity and aesthetic interest. Abstract painting before 1946 and most subsequent painting kept the representational subordination of the whole to its parts. Sculpture still does. In the new work the shape, image, color and surface are single and not partial and scattered. There aren't any neutral or moderate areas or parts, any connections or transitional areas. The difference between the new work and earlier painting and present sculpture is like that between one of Brunelleschi's windows in the Badia di Fiesole and the façade of the Palazzo Rucellai, which is only an undeveloped rectangle as a whole and is mainly a collection of highly ordered parts.

The use of three dimensions makes it possible to use all sorts of materials and colors. Most of the work involves new materials, either recent inventions or things not used before in art. Little was done until lately with the wide range of industrial products. Almost nothing has been done with industrial techniques and, because of the cost, probably won't be for some time. Art could be mass-produced, and possibilities otherwise unavailable, such as stamping, could be used. Dan Flavin, who uses fluorescent lights, has appropriated the results of industrial production. Materials vary greatly and are simply materials — formica, aluminum, cold-rolled steel, plexiglas, red and common brass, and so forth. They are specific. If they are used directly, they are more specific. Also, they are usually aggressive. There is an objectivity to the obdurate identity of a material. Also, of course, the qualities of materials — hard mass, soft mass, thickness of 1/32, 1/16, 1/8 inch, pliability, slickness, translucency, dullness — have unobjective uses. The vinyl of Oldenburg's soft objects looks the same as ever, slick, flaccid and a little disagreeable, and is objective, but it is pliable and can be sewn and stuffed with air and kapok and hung or set down, sagging or collapsing. Most of the new materials are not as accessible as oil on canvas and are hard to relate to one another. They aren't obviously art. The form of a work and its materials are



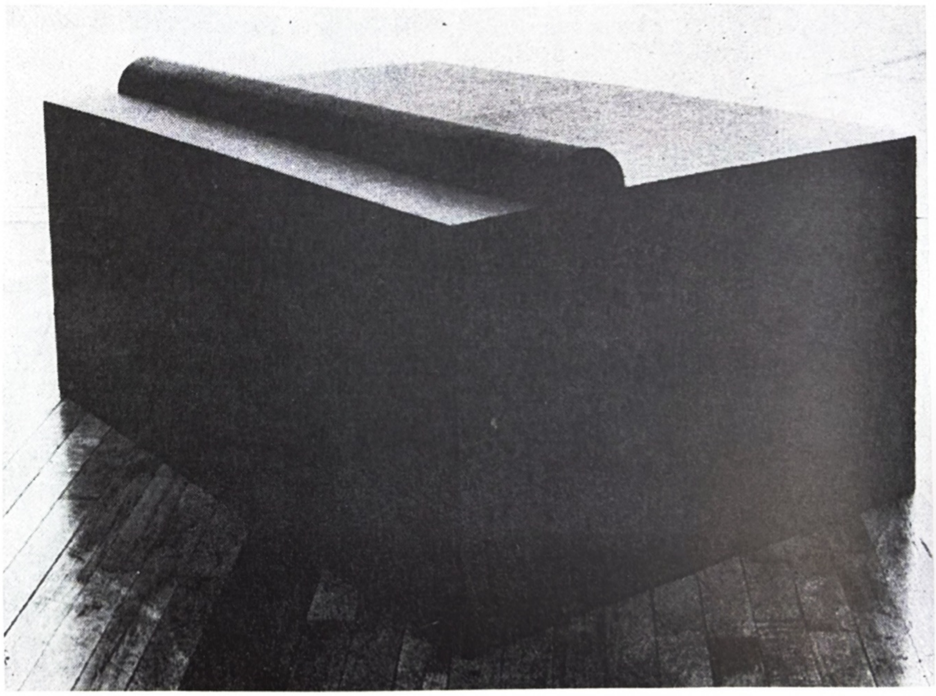
Richard Artschwager, *Untitled* (1964)



Phillip King, *Rosebud*

closely related. In earlier work the structure and the imagery were executed in some neutral and homogeneous material. Since not many things are lumps, there are problems in combining the different surfaces and colors and in relating the parts so as not to weaken the unity.

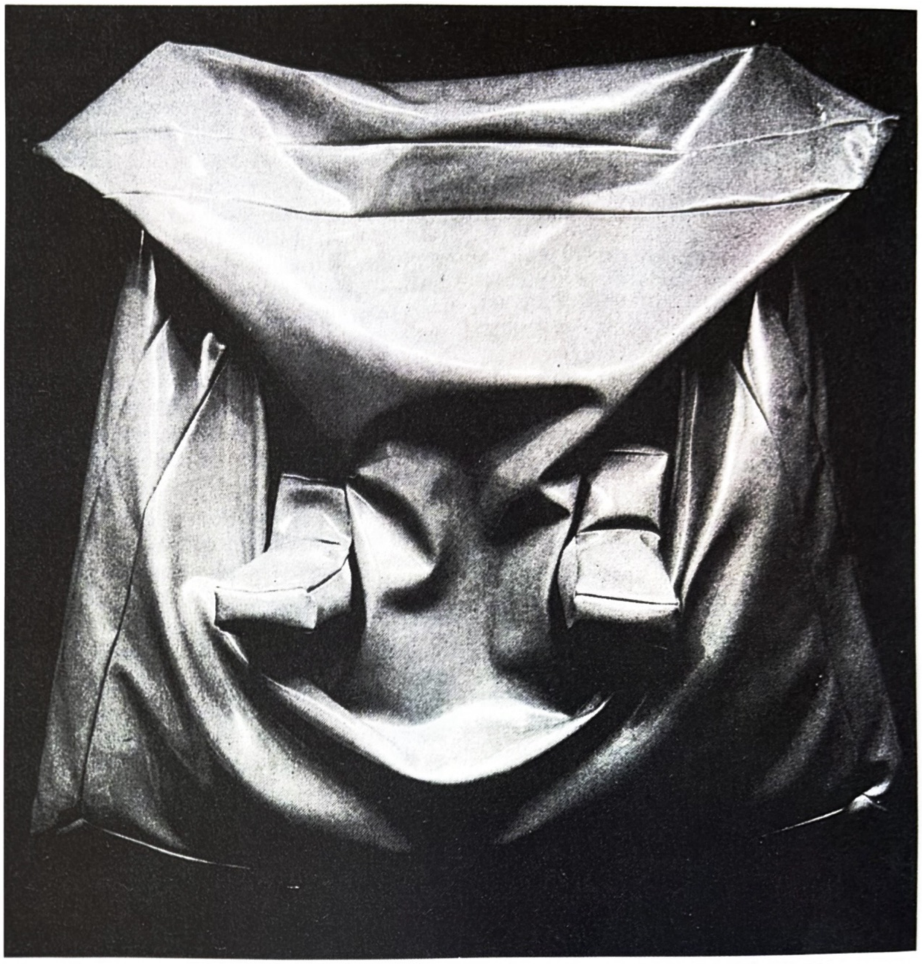
Three-dimensional work usually doesn't involve ordinary anthropomorphic imagery. If there is a reference it is single and explicit. In any case the chief interests are obvious. Each of Bontecou's reliefs is an image. The image, all of the parts and the whole shape are coextensive. The parts are either part of the hole or part of the mound which forms the hole. The hole and the mound are only two things, which, after all, are the same thing. The parts and divisions are either radial or concentric in regard to the hole, leading in and out and enclosing. The radial and concentric parts meet more or less at right angles and in detail are structure in the old sense, but collectively are subordinate to the single form. Most of the new work has no structure in the usual sense, especially the work of Oldenburg and Stella. Chamberlain's work does involve composition. The nature of Bontecou's single image is not so different from that of images which occurred in a small way in semiabstract painting. The image is primarily a single emotive one, which alone wouldn't resemble the old imagery so much, but to which internal and external references, such as violence and war, have been added. The additions are somewhat pictorial, but the image is essentially new and surprising; an image has never before been the whole work, been so large, been so explicit and aggressive. The abatised orifice is like a strange and dangerous object. The qual-



Don Judd, *Untitled* (1963)

ity is intense and narrow and obsessive. The boat and the furniture that Kusama covered with white protuberances have a related intensity and obsessiveness and are also strange objects. Kusama is interested in obsessive repetition, which is a single interest. Yves Klein's blue paintings are also narrow and intense.

The trees, figures, food or furniture in a painting have a shape or contain shapes that are emotive. Oldenburg has taken this anthropomorphism to an extreme and made the emotive form, with him basic and biopsychological, the same as the shape of an object, and by blatancy subverted the idea of the natural presence of human qualities in all things. And further, Oldenburg avoids trees and people. All of Oldenburg's grossly anthropomorphized objects are manmade — which right away is an empirical matter. Someone or many made these things and incorporated their preferences. As practical as an ice-cream cone is, a lot of people made a choice, and more agreed, as to its appearance and existence. This interest shows more in the recent appliances and fixtures from the home and especially in the bedroom suite, where the choice is flagrant. Oldenburg exaggerates the accepted or chosen form and turns it into one of his own. Nothing made is completely objective, purely practical or merely present. Oldenburg gets along very well without anything that would ordinarily be called structure. The ball and cone of the large ice-cream cone are enough. The whole thing is a profound form, such as sometimes occurs in primitive art. Three fat layers with a small one on top are enough. So is a flaccid, flamingo switch draped from two points. Simple form and one or two colors are considered less by old standards. If changes in art are compared backwards, there always seems to be a reduction, since only old attributes are counted and these are always fewer. But obviously new things are more, such as Oldenburg's techniques and materials. Oldenburg needs three dimensions in order to simulate and enlarge a real object and to equate it and an emotive form. If a hamburger were painted it would retain something of the traditional anthropomorphism. George Brecht and Robert Morris use real objects and depend on the viewer's knowledge of these objects.*



Claes Oldenburg, *Switches Sketch* (1964)

The editor, not I, included the photograph of my work.

case Reynolds Aluminum, and Reynolds' engineers answered that the sheet would sag five sixteenths of an inch. That was too much and I reworked all of the dimensions, reducing the span to five feet one inch, the height to four feet and the length to nine. I didn't want to use three quarter inch aluminum originally because I thought it would be too thick but after seeing this piece I think it would be all right for the first large piece. The engineers say it would sag less than an eighth.

The sheets were anodized — clear — in Philadelphia, since we couldn't find a company with large enough tanks in New York. The sheets are held together by screws but could be welded if the piece were to stay in one place.

Studio International, April 1969

Complaints: part I

I haven't written anything in quite a while; I have a lot of complaints. Most of these are about attempts to close the fairly open situation of contemporary art. There are a lot of arguments for closure: a whole aesthetic or style, a half aesthetic or movement, a way of working, history or development, seniority, juniority, money and galleries, sociology, politics, nationalism. Most discussion of these aspects is absolute; something is the only true art and something else has got to go. Usually little is said about particular works and artists and nothing about the actual differences and similarities between artists. I've read very little about the present kind of large scale and it is common to almost everyone. It's very definite and will some day be an obvious aspect of the time. That's true of colour also, and of wholeness, which has been discussed some.

Everything on the list should be considered but almost never should any argument result in the destructive conclusion that is the usual ending, or apparent ending, since often it's the premise. Obviously everyone is going to prefer kinds of art. I prefer art that isn't associated with anything and am tired of the various kinds of dada, and don't think, for example, that the work of Johns and Rauschenberg is so momentous. But it's good and I'm not at all inclined to rank them below every last abstract artist. And I know that their work has connections to so-called abstract work. (I don't like the word 'abstract'.) Or, I think American art is far better than that anywhere else but I don't think that situation is desirable. Actually, it's international art in America and the best thing that could happen would be equal international art elsewhere.

In 1964 I wrote an article on the difference between the years just before and after 1960. Most of the artists, the followers by definition of a majority, and the galleries were fixed upon Abstract Expressionism. It was a style and the only legitimate one. Every little debaser was praised as a great artist by Irving Sandler and Max Kozloff and painted a painting in *Art News.* But Reinhardt and Rauschenberg, for example, were irrelevant flukes. It was an unpleasant situation and somewhat like the extremely warped one that existed in the U. S. before the late forties. By 1960 it became evident that the best work wasn't among the so-called abstract expressionists, except for some of the original ones, Rothko, Newman and Still, and one later one, Frankenthaler. There were Reinhardt and Rauschenberg, Louis, Noland, Johns and then Chamberlain, Di Suvero, Bontecou, Stella, Oldenburg, Rosenquist and Lichtenstein.

In the last three years or so I've thought that Clement Greenberg and his followers have been trying to form a similar closed situation. I've expected a lot of stupid things to reoccur — movements, labels — but I didn't think there would be another attempt to impose a universal style. It's naive and it's directly opposed to the nature of contemporary art, including that of the artists they support. Their opinions are the same as those of the critics and followers of the late fifties: there is only one way of working — one kind of form, one medium; everything else is irrelevant and trivial; history is on our side; preserve the true art; preserve the true criticism. This means that Grace Hartigan and Michael Goldberg were better than Reinhardt and Rauschenberg and that Jack Bush and Edward Avedisian are better than Oldenburg and Flavin. Both groups, by these attitudes, slowly destroy the work they're protecting. The followers of the abstract expressionists and some of the leaders went backwards toward representational painterliness. The Greenbergers, except Noland, steadily become either atmospheric or cubistic. I think Noland is the only first-rate artist involved — Louis is dead — and I like Noland's circles better than I like anything of his since. Caro is a conventional, competent second-generation artist. I don't understand the link between Noland and Caro, since wholeness is basic to Noland's work and cubist fragmentation is basic to Caro's. I think Caro had his first show in New York in December 1964. Di Suvero first showed his somewhat similar but far better sculpture in October 1960; by 1964 Di Suvero had a tiresome number of followers and Caro's work looked like that of just another of them. "Anthony Caro is a major artist— the best sculptor to come up since David Smith"—C. G. That's only misjudgement though. I expect that; I don't expect the little league fascism.

Barbara Reise's article on Greenberg[1] was good serious opposition. It's surprising that it wasn't done until now. Greenberg's and Michael Fried's articles and the absence of opposition make one of the numerous instances of the incompetence of art criticism. Barbara Rose did rise up in a recent article in *Artforum*,[2] but she concedes Greenberg a separate history as against that of everyone else. I'm harder on Greenberg than Barbara Reise is and don't take him so seriously. By now he's ignorant and hysterical. One instance is a laughable article in *Vogue* last May, ostensibly on Ann Truitt but mainly on the failings of "Minimal Art," including me. This is the nadir of the failures:

> 'And with the help of monochrome the artist would have been able to dissemble her feminine sensibility behind a more aggressively far-out, non-art look, as so many masculine Minimalists have *their* rather feminine sensibilities.' (Greenberg's italics.)

Greenberg made a garbled attempt to give the invention of 'Minimal Art', though it was not worth inventing, to Ann Truitt.

> 'But if any one artist started or anticipated Minimal Art, it was she, in the fence-like and then box-like objects of wood or aluminium she began making, the former in 1961 and the latter in 1962.
>
> 'Truitt's first New York show, at the André Emmerich Gallery in February 1963, met incomprehension (from, among others, Donald Judd, today a Minimalist leader, who reviewed the show for *Arts*.)
>
> 'Had they been monochrome, the "objects" in Truitt's 1963 show would have qualified as first examples of orthodox Minimal Art.'

The last sentence is in the category of 'if the queen had balls, she would be king'. An opening sentence is:

> 'It is hardly two years since Minimal Art first appeared as a coherent movement, and it is

> already more the rage among artists than Pop or Op ever was.'

That chronology is either intentional falsification or ignorance. The statement about my derogatory review of Truitt's show is also shady. Regardless of work never shown, Flavin, Morris and I were in a group show at Green in January 1963 and later that year. One of Greenberg's worst statements, attributing everything to money, was in *Studio International* in January 1968:

> 'The last such phase, Minimal Art, has swept the museums and the magazines and the art buffs, but it doesn't sell commensurately because it's too hard to install. And with Novelty Art sales decide things; Pop, Op, Assemblage, Erotic, Neo-Figurative, and the rest don't persist in the face of economic adversity — just as second-generation Abstract Expressionism didn't . . . .

It's surprising and despicable.

Greenberg was right of course in supporting Pollock and the others but mainly his writing then was only approval and disapproval. He didn't write much about Pollock and didn't add anything to the thinking about his work. He did little for David Smith. He did less for everyone else, including Noland, Louis, and Caro. (I consider Olitski's work chronically unresolved and beyond thought.) I didn't think about Greenberg much in the early sixties and he didn't write much. I suppose Fried and Philip Leider, the editor of *Artforum*, kept him going. When *Artforum* moved to New York it revived the roster of New York hacks.

I gave up on Michael Fried when I heard him say during a symposium that he couldn't see how anyone who liked Noland and Olitski or Stella could also like Oldenburg and Rauschenberg or Lichtenstein, whichever. He was very passionate about it. (Apparently Fried likes Stella but Greenberg doesn't.) I've never liked Kozloff's ornate platitudes but during this symposium he actually gave a theory for always writing about things three or four years too late. Fried's opinions narrowed a few years ago. I remember enthusiasm for Chamberlain's work; I've heard this disappeared because of Greenberg's disapproval. Fried's article "Art and Objecthood" in the 1967 summer issue of *Artforum* was stupid. He cross-referenced Bob Morris, Tony Smith and myself and argued against the mess. Smith's statements and his work are contradictory to my own. Bob Morris' Dada interests are very alien to me and there's a lot in his dogmatic articles that I don't like. I was especially irked by Fried's ignorant misinterpretation of my use of the word "interesting." I obviously use it in a particular way but Fried reduces it to the cliché "merely interesting":

> 'Judd himself has as much as acknowledged the problematic character of the literalist enterprise by his claim, "A work needs only to be interesting." '

Fried is not careful and informed. His pedantic pseudo-philosophical analysis is the equivalent of *Art News'* purple poetic prose of the late fifties.

That prose was only emotional recreation and Fried's thinking is just formal analysis and both methods used exclusively are shit.

Artforum, since it came to New York, has seemed like *Art News* in the late fifties. There's serious high art and then there's everybody else, all equally low. Flavin plays Reinhardt, entertaining but not worth an article on his work; Bell and Irwin hardly exist; Greenbergers such as Krauss review all the shows; Darby Bannard paints a picture, *Hélion relived;* and articles come steadily out of the Fogg. I once complained to Leider that the magazine was dominated by Michael Fried and the third string and he said that he didn't think it was biased, that he published Robert Smithson too. That's balanced mediocrity. *Artforum* is probably the best art magazine still but it's depressing that it's gotten so bad and so close to the others. I don't know much about *Studio International*. *Artforum*'s failure to evaluate artists and to think about their work is characteristic of the whole situation of current art. Art gets quite a bit of attention but the quality of that is depressing.

Greenberg and Fried are of course wrong about mainstream history or development. It's too simple and, as Barbara Reise said, it's nineteenth-century philosophy. Most ideas of history are simplistic, archaic and destructive. One of *Artforum*'s numerous vague mediocre articles was by Jack Wesley Burnham, maybe kin to the preacher but none to the painter. Burnham wrote a book, *Beyond Modern Sculpture*. Never mind the present. It's a pastiche of art survey information and misinformation. His idea of history, such as it is, is deterministic. Everyone has his hindsighted place and history rolls on. One cliché:

> 'It is the peculiarly blind quality of historical change that we only grasp the nature of a political or cultural era after it has reached and passed its apogee of influence.'

For whom? For the people who won't think now about particular things like scale? A good example of baloney and of silly futurism is this:

> 'The shifting psychology of sculpture invention closely parallels the inversion taking place between technics and man: *as the craftsman slowly withdraws his personal feelings from the constructed object, the object gradually gains its independence from its human maker; in time it seeks a life of its own through self-reproduction.*' (Burnham's italics.)

I dislike very much this sort of sloppy correlation of such highly different activities as science and art, the careless and general history and the mystical projection of the future.

> 'Sculpture can choose one of two courses: it can be fashioned as a reaction against technology or as an extension of technical methodology.'

That's the choice? That's Max Kozloff's or Hilton Kramer's choice.

Originally I agreed to write this to keep *Studio International* from calling me a minimalist. Very few artists receive attention without publicity as a new group. It's another case of the simplicity of criticism and of the public. It seems as if magazines are unwilling to give a new artist space by himself. *Artforum* has had some discussion of single new artists, mostly by John Coplans. One person's work isn't considered sufficiently important historically to be discussed alone. But most of the so-called movements are only one person or maybe two remotely related. That's obvious by the work, by the initial development, by the fact that in two or three years the followers follow elsewhere. I hated the Primary Structure show at the Jewish Museum in 1965, both itself and its title — primary sounds Platonic. The show started out a year earlier with Flavin, Morris, myself, maybe Andre and Bell and maybe a couple of others. Forty odd artists, I think, were in the show and a lot of them, most of Park Place, had become geometric during that year. Barbara Rose's ABC article was just publicity. Theme shows and movements are still produced. Discussion, such as Greenberg's in the Truitt article, is still by groups.

A few months ago *Artforum* ran another manifesto by Bob Morris entitled 'Anti-Form'. It was illustrated with photographs of work by several very diverse new artists, suggesting by the layout that they were a group and that they were following Morris' work in felt, begun a year and a half ago. Leider recently wrote an article in the *New York Times* entitled, I think, 'In the Shadow of Bob Morris'. This was about a show by several of these artists — Saret, Hesse, Serra, Sonnier, Nauman and others — organized by Morris. The show was all right but the suggestion of similarity is bad and the impression that they're fathered by Morris is terrible. Nauman's floppy pieces actually precede Morris' by a couple of years. He and Hesse were in a group show at Fischbach around two years ago. It's not likely that anyone as good as Serra developed his work from someone else's in a year and a half. The suggestion is like Greenberg's that Morris and I picked up on Truitt's work. It's impossible chronologically. Neither do good artists develop substantially from other artists' work.

See Part 2. I've had enough of this.

see Complaints: part II, *p. 207*

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[1] 'Greenberg and The Group: a retrospective view', *Studio International*, part I May 1968, part II June 1968.

[2] 'The Politics of Art — part I', *Artforum* February 1968.

fluorescent lights, etc. from Dan Flavin, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, October 1969

Aspects of Flavin's Work

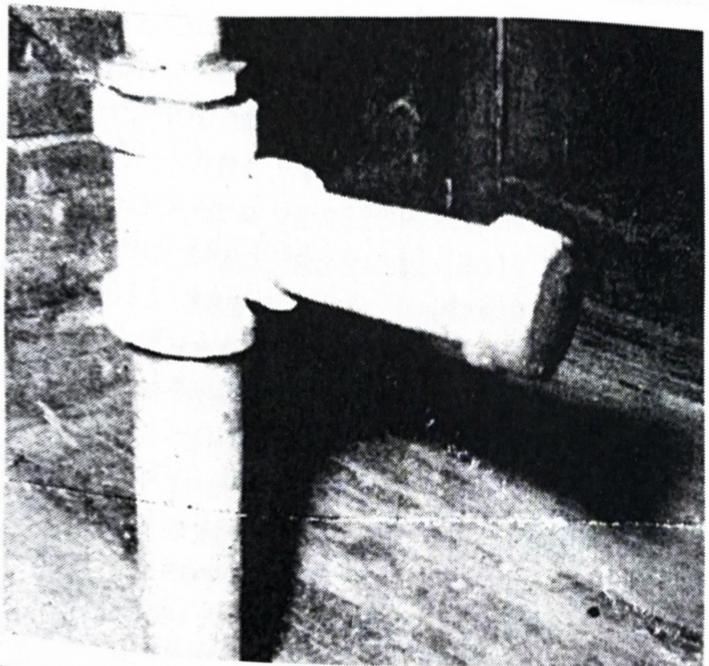
Three main aspects of Flavin's work are the fluorescent tubes as the source of light, the light diffused throughout the surrounding space or cast upon nearby surfaces, and the arrangement together or

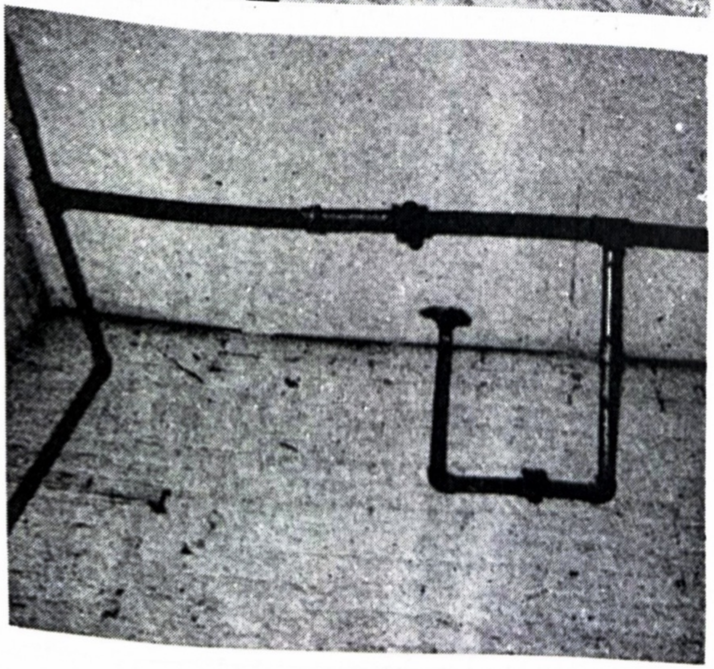
York, April 1971

WOHO

If enough plumbers petition Donald Elliott the City will establish legal living in an area west of Broadway to be known as the WoHo Plumbers Community. In order for a plumber to obtain a certificate to live in WoHo he must show photographs of his work to a certifying committee. Proper certifving photographs are shown below.

Mike Howard and D.J.





simply with the election of new Presidents. . . .

Arts Magazine, March 1973

Complaints: part II

In an article in *Studio International* a couple of years ago I complained about the incompetence of art criticism and the attempt of various persons to stop thinking. That situation hasn't changed. The other great failure is that of the museums and of public support generally. At the present, other than the artists, almost all money and interest come from private collectors through the dealers. This would be all right as part of a large live situation but it's insufficient and narrow as nearly the whole situation. Business becomes too important; paintings and portable objects get made but not large objects or spatial situations; the collectors are mostly of one class, which gets pretty claustrophobic.

There should be several sources of interest and money. At least there could be an accurate art criticism and maybe even a thinking art criticism. A couple of people are exceptions to that condemnation. Also, art criticism needs money. No one can live on serious criticism.

The museums should be independent, responsible, and useful. Now they go through the dealers, not just for purchases, which they avoid if possible, but for advice, information, and the organization of their shows. You seldom hear of a curator poking around on his own and museums seldom show anything out of proportion to or simply outside of the somewhat warped scheme of the art business. The artists and the dealers pay for the museum's shows. The museums seldom want to make anything for a show and usually don't take care of what's already made.

There should be an artist's organization to object to abuses and to support artists who aren't being given a chance. Visual art must be the only unorganized and undefended activity left in the United States. A dozen of us formed a group last spring and are trying, not so brilliantly, to resist.

The various governments should support art. In the last few years some money has come from the federal government, but not much. New York State provides some. New York City subsidizes construction unions and real estate developers but I've never heard of them buying a contemporary work of art. There have been a few ploys lately whereby you could give them something. However, the city doesn't have to spend immediate money to be a help. It could just consider artists and everyone as citizens and leave them alone. But the Wagner Administration knew and the Lindsay Administration knows that finally it costs too much in real estate to pay attention to the rights of the city's residents.

A relatively small number of visual artists, themselves insufficiently supported, are supporting by what they do a large superstructure of museums and curators, art departments and art teachers, critics, some art historians, some architects, money dispensers, some commercial art and so on. Contemporary art is the excuse for a great amount of activity and money. But not many people are concerned with getting it done. Everyone's time is wasted. The artists might tax such dependents as Albert Shanker's art teachers.

The museums are charities that are monuments to the rich. The increase in the number of museums is evidently not so much an increase in interest in contemporary art as it is an increase in an idea of monuments. As a monument the building is crucial and not its contents. Whether private, partially public, or public, a museum is run by its benefactors and everything goes downhill from there. The museums are always doing artists the favor of showing their work. It's an honor to be associated with the company and don't ask for a raise. Museums want to be given work or pay very little because, after all, you're the suppliant. There's almost no sign of support or interest in getting work done. If any purpose is mentioned it's that the museums are educating the public. Museums are show business paid for by the artists and the dealers.

The museums patronize, isolate, and neutralize artists. When I received the press release from the Guggenheim Museum in April, 1971 about the cancellation of Hans Haacke's show I thought it a classic case of self-indictment. The two main paragraphs are worth printing.

"The contents of the exhibition were to include presentations that in the view of counsel might raise legal objections and in view of the Foundation's trustees would run counter to established policies that exclude active engagement toward social and political ends."

"We have held consistently that under our Charter we are pursuing creative and educational objectives that are self-sufficient and without ulterior motive," Thomas M. Messer, director of the museum states. "We have high regard for Mr. Haacke as an artist and regret that agreement could not be reached on a manner of presenting his ideas."

I sent this letter to Tom Messer.

"I got your press release and a copy of your letter to Haacke and his statement. You made a big mistake. You can't refuse to show one kind of art. Any political statement, either by declaration or incorporation into a context, can be art. You renege on every kind of art when you refuse to show a kind that is political. I've always thought that most museums and collectors didn't understand what they were buying; your statement that exhibitable art should be generalized and symbolic confirms that. I'm interested in making so-called abstract art and I don't like the idea that it is exhibitable by virtue of its abstractness or unintelligibility. Since the big business in New York is real estate, it's pretty interesting that that's what bothers you, the lawyers and your trustees. I imagine something against the war would have been general enough and easy enough."

The Guggenheim tried to get me to lend a piece after that and two memorable ideas in that conversation were that I shouldn't harm the institution and that the role of the staff is that of mediators between the artists and the trustees. Other than a great building and shows of contemporary art it's hard to find the institution. I wasn't surprised at the second idea.

The museums never have much money for contemporary art but they have millions for fancy buildings. As most people know Pasadena spent 3 million or so on an awful building and then couldn't afford anything to put in it, and in fact, I think, had to sell some things and close a couple of days a week. The new Walker Art Center, which isn't unpleasant, cost about 4.5 million. Their budget for art has never sounded like that. While the museum was being built, its director, Martin Friedman, talked about the possibilities of the building; things could go outside; a piece of mine could go on the wall of the central highest section, which didn't seem like a good idea. As the building was being finished he asked me to come to Minneapolis and figure out what I wanted to do. I wanted to make a new piece that would go along the edge of one of the lower sections involving the angle between it and the opposite side of the street below. The piece, maybe 20 feet long, would replace the balustrade. After all that talk it took Friedman a second to dismiss the idea. It was unsafe, although it would be hard to get through the piece, and it would interfere with Ed Barnes's architecture. Friedman called Barnes just to make sure, and sure enough it was unsafe and would interfere. I consider the chance to make a new piece by a good artist very important. To be fair, I should say that Martin Friedman is one of the best directors, that the installation of shows at the Walker is good, and that the museum is fairly careful with works. However the incident has the quality of liberalism, that is, smiling conservatism.

Last October in *Vogue,* Barbara Rose wrote about the new Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth. The building cost 7.5 million and for a change contains more art than its worth, about 25 million, but all past and distant. It's a strange idea that other people's culture is your culture. It's strange that there's that much money somehow for art and that most good contemporary artists who need money to work can't get much. The situation is perverse. Barbara's remarks in *Vogue* and some quotes from the Kimbell's director Ric Brown illustrate the attitudes behind the situation:

"As the medieval cleric saw signs of regeneration in the intense local competition to erect the most spectacular basilica, we may perhaps interpret the simultaneous emergence of a striking number of outstanding temples of culture throughout America, but especially in the Lone Star State, as a sign that something extraordinary is happening."

"After Harvard, he worked at New York's Frick Collection, where he developed his idea of what an art museum should be—not a cold official building but a warm domestic setting like the great mansions for which most Old Master paintings were originally designed. For this reason, the Kimbell is furnished with Oriental carpets and comfortable furniture ('All made in Texas,' Brown said proudly), in simple designs that seem to belong to no period."

"I like to think that this is the palace of a great noble," Brown makes a sweeping gesture, "and that he has invited you into his home to enjoy his collection."

"A statement of the dignity and solemnity of art, the Kimbell is a building you can't enter without entering a new frame of mind that makes you feel in touch in some way with the rational humanism of the peoples who founded our civilization."

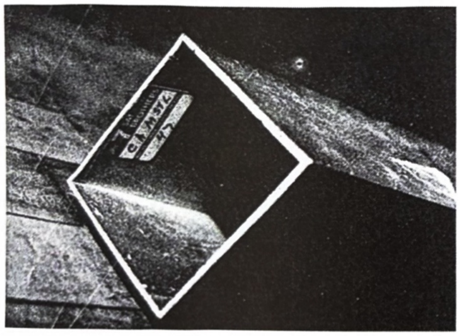
"To come on this great monument in the middle of the New World, in a place that not long ago was uninhabited cattle country, is to feel optimistic about the future of American culture generally. For what's happening in Texas is also happening, although perhaps not on such a great scale, throughout America. The reason is that for the first time since the 1930's efforts are being made to decentralize culture through grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, which is funding museum centers from Oregon to Oklahoma and from Minnesota to Missouri."

"No one can tell what all this activity will lead to, of course. Will cattle barons and oil tycoons become the next Medici princes? Perhaps there's a good chance, if the motto on Ric Brown's bulletin

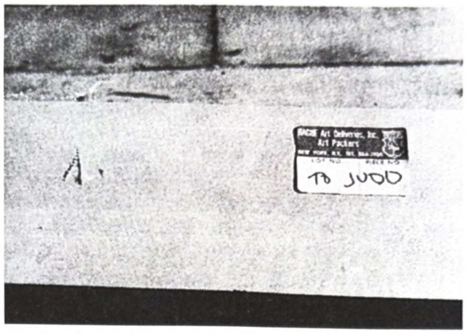
board holds true. It reads: They became what they beheld.''

That's all pretty amusing to quote Bob Irwin.

The first time I had anything to do with a museum was when the Pasadena Museum organized the 1965 São Paulo Bienal. Gretchen Glicksman went to Santini's warehouse and made drawings of every piece and noted every mark and dent. I thought that that was very professional, that that was the way they did it in museums. That was about the last I saw of professional handling. The various shippers are careless and usually the museum staff that handles art is careless. The public is awful and the guards don't mind. The handling is even worse when a show is over and the museum wants it out of there fast. Insurance is a farce. It's always up to the artist or the dealer to spend two years collecting it, if they can. Insurance is not based on the destruction of a work of art, but on partial damage or the cost of replacement. The surface of a large expensive stainless steel piece of mine was damaged in Europe two years ago by being packed with the corrugated side of the cardboard next to the steel. The insurance company decided the piece was damaged 10%. But you can no longer sell the piece and get your money back. And also the 10% has never arrived.



A couple of lacquered pieces of mine have come back with Santini stickers stuck on the lacquer. Hague slid a painted wooden piece on its side along their concrete floor. They're the worst. Budworth has never damaged anything. Auer, which the Whitney uses, has no idea of what they're moving; they slid another wooden piece on its side across the bed of their truck. One company, whose name I can't remember, possibly connected to Auer, tied 2 large metal boxes on the tailgate of their truck, between the open doors, which pounded in a side of each box. No one ever knows how the damage happened. Nothing is ever art to any of the truckmen. My work is just metal; Flavin's is just fixtures; Chamberlain's just junk; and so on.



Guards usually have the same attitude; the stuff is not worth taking care of. Someone was putting more fingerprints on one end of a piece of mine in the Metropolitan extravaganza of '69 while the other end was being cleaned. The guard said nothing. He also didn't object to someone walking on a perforated metal floor piece. That came back caved-in. It didn't do any good to complain to Henry Geldzahler. Bill Agee though, fired a guard for going to sleep a second time leaning against a stack. It's common at an opening for glasses to be on everything and for people to sit or lean on everything. A man at the Jewish Museum leaned on one arm against the face of a box. Somewhere else a woman leaned the same way against a Rothko. Another at the Whitney one time leaned back against a Pollock.

Quite a few of my pieces have been worn out in shows, leaving me and the Castelli Gallery with the construction cost. Mostly it's accumulated damage. A few have been destroyed. A large anodized aluminum piece that was in my show at the Whitney, which cost seven thousand to make, was sent to the 4th Documenta. It was braced with wood for moving but after it arrived in Kassel, they took the wood out and moved it again, breaking most of the welds. They couldn't show it and sent it to Van der Net's factory in Holland. The factory left it outside for two years, ruined the surface, then loosely and crookedly welded it again and sprayed it with aluminum paint. It had to be destroyed. Documenta was never interested. It was awful this time too. They sent a letter that seemed to be missing its first half informing me that some small unspecified piece would be in the show and ordering me to check a bundle of papers they had sent. I told them I didn't want to be in their show. The museums have numerous reasons for mistreating artists and their work. Usually it's because the artists are young or are thought not so important. In this case it seemed to be that my piece was to be token history in some category for large pieces by younger artists. This is pretty ironic after the destruction of the large piece that was to have been in the 4th Documenta. These large shows are usually a mess and shouldn't occur. They're show business at its worst.

The whole procedure of exhibition should become slow and careful. There should be less and smaller travelling shows. A great deal of contemporary art is permanently damaged. I remember a big handprint on a painting of Still's at the Modern. I saw a painting by Newman with fingerprints down both edges of the raw canvas. Most of Reinhardt's paintings are scratched. A lot of Bell's pieces have been broken. There should be rooms somewhere or small museums where a portion of, say, Newman's work or Reinhardt's is visible and permanent. Otherwise it isn't going to last. The fast and constant exhibitions enforce the idea of performance, show business, rather than the idea of making art, either movable or for a particular situation. It's serious to make something that will be visible for a long time; it's not so serious to have an exhibition. Exhibitions also stress quantity and necessarily limit time and attention.

Installation is seldom good. Almost always everything is crowded. The plan reproduced of a room at the Modern is typical. The room showed that the museum didn't know much about the paintings and Larry Bell's piece and was certainly not capable of playing its much publicized role of educating the public. Large shows, such as the Whitney Annuals, are always crowded. In Geldzahler's show at the Metropolitan, paintings were behind sculpture and sculpture in front of paintings as if the walls and the floor were not in the same room. There was no idea that the paintings and the sculpture were all equal and discrete works of art, that they couldn't overlap and that they required various kinds of space. Flavin's was the only good room in the show because he did it himself.

All the conditions in museums are based

upon showing medium-sized painting and sculpture. The museums are very reluctant to make particular installations. You can't even get enough light. Yet for a long time art has been large or has required special spaces or conditions. The Modern bought very little during the 'sixties' of even small or medium-sized work. It's of course in no way Modern. The exhibition "Spaces," organized by Jennifer Licht, is the Modern's only effort in ten years to deal with one large portion of contemporary thinking. The large shows of Stella's and Oldenburg's work are recent. They should have occurred in '64 or '65.

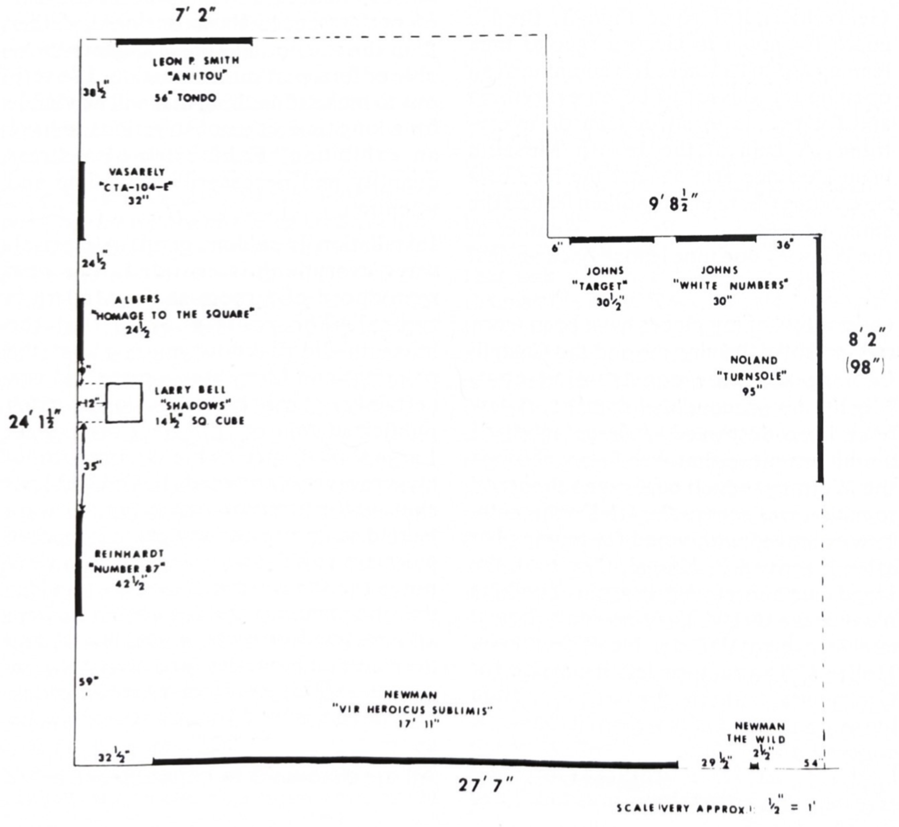
Since the museums are educating and entertaining the public the turnover has to be fast. A month or six weeks may be all right for portable things but it's too short for large, troublesome and expensive things. Everything is based upon exhibitions, upon display. Critics seldom write about anyone's work between shows. The conditions for looking at art are miserable. Shows are often full of people, a few of whom are idiots. You can only stand and look, usually past someone else. No space, no privacy, no sitting or lying down, no drinking or eating, no thinking, no living. It's all a show. It's just information. Art is kept isolated and half visible. You can seldom see much of what is being done in New York or of what has been done. Art isn't visible in ordinary circumstances. New York City doesn't want it around. Since art historians and trustees have so much to say about what happens to artists' work, contemporary art is treated as possible rare artifacts, but mostly bound to fail. The culture of the Kimbell Museum, the Metropolitan, and Lincoln Center controls the exhibition of contemporary art—makes sure it is only exhibited. Lincoln Center is the largest cultural effort of more than a generation and it's just schmaltz. For the price of a few Oriental rugs made in Texas, Fort Worth could have had some real art. Barbara, however, is "optimistic about the future of American culture generally."

At the opening of a show I had at the Pasadena Museum I counted sixty-four mistakes in the catalogue. Being wary, we had asked several times if we could check the catalogue. It was never sent. Barbara Haskell, who prepared it, knew little about my work. For example, one piece was given as anodized aluminum, painted blue, instead of blue anodized aluminum. John Coplans resigned as director sometime after scheduling the show but kept the job of producing a catalogue and installing the show. Bill Agee was the present director. Obviously Coplans didn't worry too much about the catalogue. He was supposed to write an essay but wrote six columns instead since he had an interview with me to fill up the space. That had been made to provide an accurate chronology for his essay. At the last minute he asked permission to print the interview in the catalogue, which I gave out of weariness. I was never asked if that interview could be printed in *Art Forum*. Coplans probably got paid for it. During the installation Coplans appeared once for five minutes, maybe twice. Agee and the staff and I, Jamie Dearing, and Henry Weber from Bernstein Brothers did the work. Money was a big issue all along. At first there was to be money for a new piece or two, since that's what I get out of these shows. That disappeared. There was even a fight to get a thousand odd dollars to get Jamie and Henry out there for the installation. Coplans got seven thousand himself as "guest director" and the stupid catalogue cost another seven thousand. That's a long way from Gretchen Glicksman.

In December, 1970, *Science* magazine ran two installments of about four and three pages each on the National Endowment for the Humanities. The articles, by Constance Holden, were cheerful and everything was art. Since I don't think museums and schools are art and since I think it's a case of individuals against institutions, I wrote *Science:*

Probably the reason the National Foundation for the Arts and Humanitities is so little criticized, as Constance Holden says it is, is that few people take it seriously. I'll take it seriously once. The main fact is that it gives most of its money to institutions and little, "about 4 percent," to individual artists. "The endowment started out by handing over 80 percent of its budget for individual study and research. Now, with priorities shifting to education and public programs, the proportion is down to 35 percent." The rest goes to "kill all kinds of birds with one stone."

Some of the money is pork barrel. A lot goes to the promotion of history and the education of everyone on what the people who got the 4 or 35 percent are doing. Since 1967, 119 visual artists plus about fifteen in 1970, have gotten grants of $5000 or $7500, totaling, shy of the fifteen, 595,000 dollars. Last year I was asked to recommend artists for grants. Nobody asked me or any artist about



spending a million dollars on Westbeth. I've never met anyone who wanted Westbeth to exist, much less live in it. It's despised by everyone.

The N.F.A.H. is not comparatively free of politics. The grants to artists were "recommended by special regional panels". But most artists live in New York City, some in Los Angeles. So grants went to artists who had never been closer to art than a Kress Collection. Westbeth is a project of the J.M. Kaplan Fund which, according to the New York Post of 2 August 1969 and the New York Times of 1966 is an untaxed channel for CIA funds. 31 August 1964, Representative Patman: "Mr. Rogovin informed us that the J.M. Kaplan Fund has been operating as a conduit for channeling CIA funds and hence you would rather not discuss the matter for public record. He also indicated that the funds operations with the CIA was the reason for the lack of action on the part of the IRS." 2.6 million dollars have gone to make the American Film Institute, with matching funds from the Ford Foundation and the Motion Picture Association of America. That's not underground films. That's money to a big business, seldom cultural, that ought to be able to educate its employees and preserve its old movies.

The idea that imported history is culture is one of the great American mistakes. Why have 61 symphony orchestras, which the Ford Foundation spent 82 million on?? Why give Lincoln Center ballet so much when real dance has almost nothing? Such things as libraries. There should only be a few good ones. The same for historical art museums.

Education isn't art. It doesn't do any good to educate people in art if there isn't any. It's no good teaching some to be artists if they can't work. It's no good teaching at such a low wide level that it's only musical comedy. "Ten outstanding sculptors were invited to spend the summer chipping away at blocks of marble, and the results were left to start a sculpture park. For a modest outlay of $10,000 . . ." What outstanding artists? Who works 3 months for 1000 dollars? They killed 10 artists with one stone. Museums and art centers are great exploiters of artists; they build fancy buildings and then plead poverty on exhibitions and purchases. They are not interested in supporting art. Money to them will not go to artists. It will only be used to exploit for education what the artists have already done with difficulty on their own. Institutions trust institutions.

A card came back saying: "*Thank you for your recent letter. We are sorry to report that we have decided not to publish it. The number of communications submitted is considerably larger than the number we can publish. The Editors.*" *Science* had room for seven pages on the subject but not room for probably the only letter they got in response to the articles. It shows what they think of you and of what you do. Since they depend on the government, perhaps the articles were just an easy way to ingratiation through a subject they didn't care about.

The subject of the National Endowment is complex and much of it I don't want to write about now. I don't know much about New York State's program but it seems to have the same faults. By law not much money can go to individuals, which forces two or three people to form small institutions in order to get grants. Join the team, come aboard. Again, grants to individual artists, dancers and musicians should account for most of the money. Instead, in five years of the federal government's program, the portion to institutions has increased a great deal, while the amount of money to artists, at first around $300,000 a year, dropped after the first two years. In 1970, twenty artists got $150,000. Last October forty-five artists got $337,500. This is the budget for two years, not one. The $337,500 came out of the National Foundation's total for 71-72 of $57,750,000, more or less split between the Arts and the Humanities. $76,200,000 has been proposed for next time. Since 1967, 184 artists have gotten $1,082,500. This small amount of money goes to reality, to the basis for all other cultural activity, yet, for example, $203,767 went to the University of Wisconsin "to conduct experiments on how to increase rural community receptivity to and participation in cultural programs." Brian O'Doherty, director of the Visual Arts Program, said the amount given to individuals was limited by Congress, fixed by law. Again, it's a matter of priorities and of control. Congress knows it can't trust individuals. Matching grants are given through cities — not Lindsay's New York — for particular works, but, like sales, someone has to want something. Recently there has been $3000 each for specific projects, not enough but possibly a good scheme.

In return for permitting the Metropolitan Museum to build in Central Park, New York City asked for a community program. The Met could get $100,000 for the program from the U.S. government if it could match that. It matched it with $100,000 from the New York State Council. Prior to that the Met had purchased a Velázquez for 5.5 million. $200,000 is two-thirds of what all artists get for two years. 5.5 million is unimaginable in terms of contemporary art. A B-52 costs 8 million. They're crazy. If the artists, dancers, musicians, and other individuals don't get most of the money, It's best that the government not provide since it only fortifies the liberals' Lincoln Center culture.

The Visual Arts Program receives suggestions from an advisory board that has had some artists as members but whose members have been primarily curators, art historians, and critics. Since the situation is a pure case of distributing money to artists, a matter only of concern to artists, it seems to me that the board should be composed of artists. It's an old point that no artists are involved in running museums. In no way do artists control their own activities. It's all done for them by the less educated for other purposes. Anyway, the main effort should be to produce works of art and that's not a very visible purpose in museums and in the National Endowment.

No one should be annoyed by this article: it's all done in a spirit of cheerful revenge. Governor Preston Smith of Texas made a great statement when he was caught trading legislation for stocks: "I don't know why public officials should be singled out for exposure."

Art in America, March/April 1974

Malevich: Independent Form, Color, Surface

It's obvious now that the forms and colors in the paintings that Malevich began painting in 1915 are the first instances of form and color. It was obvious to Malevich. In *From Cubism and Futurism to Suprematism. The New Realism in Painting,* first published in December 1915, he wrote: "Forms must be given life and the right to individual existence" and "Color and texture in painting are ends in themselves." Before 1915 no form, color, surface, anything, existed as itself. The main development in painting in the 19th century is toward the independence of these things. After Malevich the development is of that independence. Almost ten years ago I saw an exhibition of Cézanne's paintings at the Metropolitan Museum, after not having seen many since a large exhibition perhaps ten years before that. Twenty years ago I liked Cézanne's paintings a great deal, and still do finally. But at that second exhibition I had to peer into them and look through the grayed color and wonder what it would be like not gray and then wonder what the forms would be like not crabbed by the figures and trees. This is a real complaint of the present against the past even though the past has to be considered as itself. With and since Malevich the several aspects of the best art have been single, like unblended Scotch. Free.

Fifty paintings were included in the exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum, most from the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, five from the Modern Museum here and a few from individual owners. There were not many drawings. The paintings lent by the Stedelijk are about half of a group of 70 sent out of Russia and shown in Berlin in 1927. The whereabouts of 55 of those are known, including seven at the Museum of Modern Art; the rest are missing, including some large paintings, one of them a Suprematist work. This was the only one-man show of Malevich's work outside Russia and seems to have been the only time Malevich left Russia. The paintings were shown in Warsaw before Berlin. Three early paintings were shown in the Salon des Indépendents in Paris in 1914. Four and five paintings, mostly Suprematist, were shown respectively in Berlin and at the Stedelijk in Amsterdam in 1922. Malevich was in only five other foreign group exhibitions, including one with *The Knife Grinder* in Wilmington in 1932, before he died in 1935. There are paintings in the Russian Museum, Leningrad, and the Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow and in private collections in Russia, notably that of George Costakis. I don't know how many paintings there are altogether. Anyway, the present exhibition seems not to contain the greater portion of either the existing paintings and drawings, or of his total work; and of that portion, more than half are early Fauve and Cubist paintings. I would like to see a lot more Suprematist paintings, especially some large ones. Judging by photographs of the numerous shows Malevich had in Russia and considering the seemingly rapid way he thought and painted, there are or must have been many more paintings.

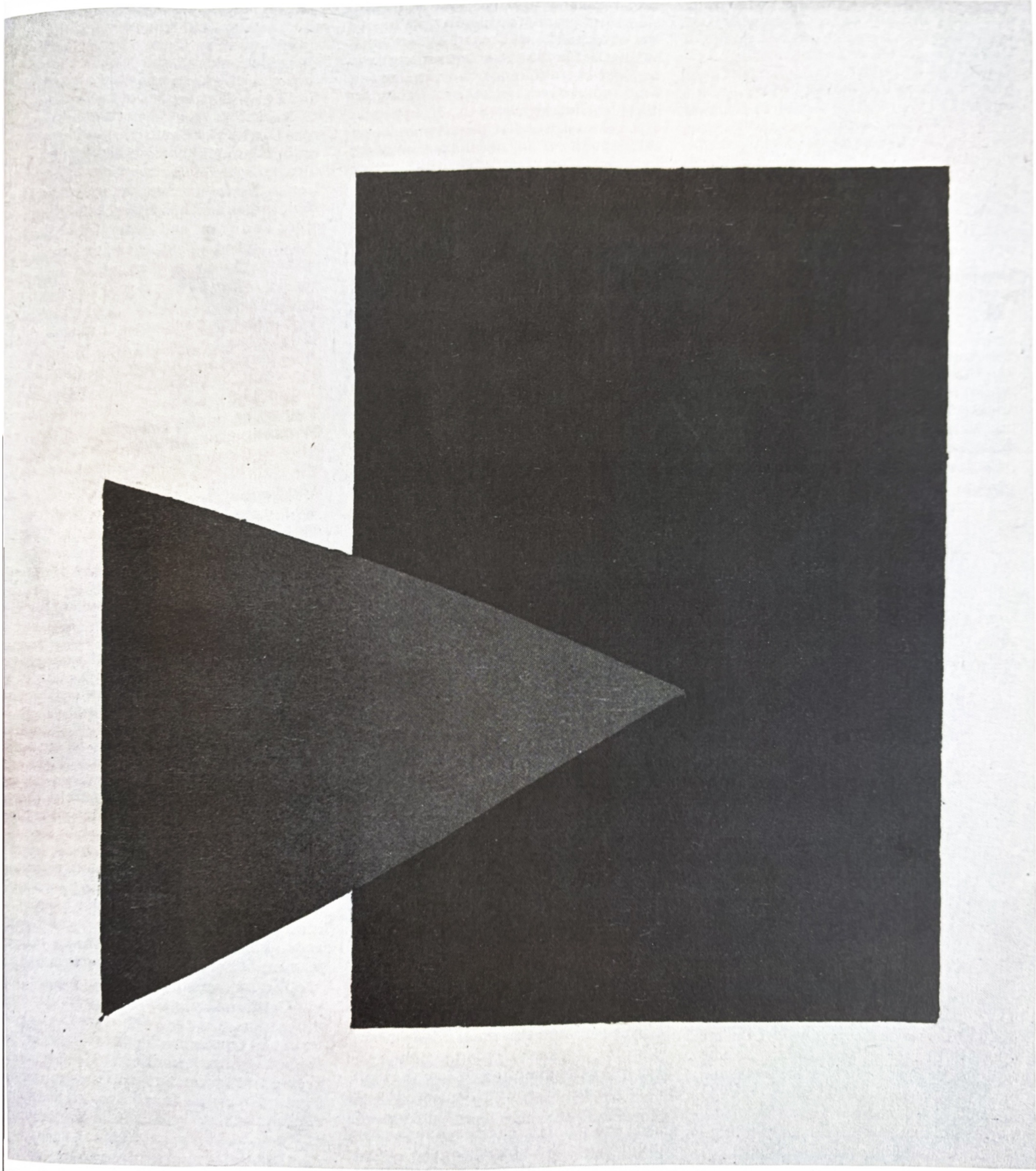
There is one Impressionist painting of 1904 in the show, of a figure seated outdoors at a table, which shows that Malevich knew very well the things he later disliked. Otherwise, the exhibition begins in 1910-11 with the Fauve "peasant" paintings, a style which began in 1908. For the next ten years or so Malevich's development is fast, with five influenced styles in the first five years and about four changes within Suprematism in the second five years or so. The "peasant" paintings, which are very good, were influenced by Larionov and Goncharova, and all three artists were influenced by the Matisses in the Shchukin collection. In *Taking in the Rye*, apparently done early in 1912, three figures and the sheaves of rye are depicted as cylindrical masses, shaded and highlighted, with clear dark colors, viridian, alizarin, ultra-marine, and copper for the rye. Some paintings of Léger's were shown in Moscow in 1912 and may have influenced this style and Malevich's subsequent one, that of *The Woodcutter*, evidently from a little later in 1912—the books don't agree on these dates. The forms in *Taking in the Rye* are done in a scheme for showing a simple, highly lit mass; the forms in *The Woodcutter*, more jumbled and overlapping and without a suggestion of depth, are done in a flat schematic version of the light-to-dark shading of the volumes of *Taking in the Rye*. Later in 1912 this second simplification turns into a fairly standard, again good, early, tight, abstract Cubism, such as the 1912 *Head of a Peasant Girl*. The paintings of 1913-14 are fairly standard later Cubism, with diverse areas and fragments of objects. Some of these paintings are choppy and a little dull, such as *The Knife Grinder*, or ordinary, such as *The Guardsman*. Probably Malevich became tired of the style.

The first Suprematist paintings of 1915 are fairly simple. Those of 1916 are complex. In 1917-18 they are again fairly simple, usually white; the forms, occasionally somewhat three-dimensional, often shade into the surrounding white. Paintings dated only "after 1920" are simple, with either large colored areas, often crosses, or a few small colored areas. In the 1920s, Malevich evidently didn't paint as much; he wrote and taught a great deal. He also made many architectural drawings and models. The paintings and drawings of the early '30s are of schematic figures with oval heads, once or twice divided. There are some portraits from 1933-34. Malevich was very lively, as was the whole situation in Russia, and the force shown in his rapid change of styles and in his writing is marvelous.

> Futurism opened the "new" in modern life: the beauty of speed. And through speed we move more swiftly.
>
> And we who only yesterday were Futurists, arrived through speed at new forms, at new relationships with nature and things.
>
> We arrived at Suprematism, leaving Futurism as a loophole through which those left behind will pass.
>
> We have abandoned Futurism; and we, the most daring, *have spat on the altar of its art.*

Malevich paints in a freewheeling, practical way. In the Suprematist paintings there are no carefully painted areas or precise edges; there is not much sense and not much more evidence of adjustment. Mondrian's and most geometric paintings before 1940 are painted carefully and especially thoughtfully, thought about and changed some as they were being painted. This precision is part of their nature. By contrast, Malevich paints as if he had everything thought out beforehand and is just laying the areas in. Occasionally he paints over an area he doesn't like just as casually, unconcerned about it showing through. The priority of thought and the matter-of-fact execution are part of the nature of these paintings. Malevich paints as if he's busy, with a lot of ideas to be gotten down, and with the knowledge that color, form and surface are what matter, and that care doesn't have much to do with these. His geometry isn't associated with clean edges, or even with four definite edges; in a few of the white paintings one or two edges are soft, and in a painting of 1917-18, the yellow trapezoid shades off into white on one side. Not until the work of Newman and Noland, and also Stella and Albers to a lesser extent, and including some early paintings of Reinhardt's, is there a somewhat loose geometry. Newman and Noland are more deliberate in the process of painting than Malevich. Since Malevich invented plain geometric forms he can't be praised for open-mindedness in their use, but it's nevertheless cheerful to see the shapes painted so freely and to realize that the thinking is also free. He has no doctrine about geometry itself.

The method of working of the "peasant" paintings, which are usually gouache, is similar to that of the Suprematist ones. They were obviously composed beforehand, as some drawings also show, and then painted surely and rapidly with few changes. The *Village*, undated, shows four buildings of similar size and three trees close in size to the buildings, all en-



Malevich, ***Supremastist Painting, Black Rectangle, Blue Triangle*** **(1915)**

closed in the foreground by a picket fence. As usual, the scene fills the picture, and the objects, painted with large brushstrokes, are up close. The clumps of leaves on the trees and the points of the fence are ticked off with quick triangles. Nothing looks reworked. The *Floor Polishers,* 1911, with two figures back to back, is painted without so much brushwork but is very complex in composition and is just as surely done. It couldn't possibly have been composed even partially as it was being painted. In *Washing Woman,* 1911, perhaps the strange interior shapes of her skirt were partly developed on the paper.

Drawings exist for many of the Suprematist paintings. A little, sometimes considerable, pencil line shows in most of the Suprematist paintings so that it seems that Malevich drew the forms on the canvas first. In *White On White,* 1918, both whites are filled to but do not quite cover an inconspicuous pencil line. In the painting with the yellow trapezoid, the three definite sides have been drawn first in pencil.

Suprematist Painting, Black Rectangle, Blue Triangle, 1915, is one of the best and simplest paintings in the exhibition and is astonishing for 1915, or since for many years. An ultramarine blue triangle overlaps a vertical black rectangle without the point of the triangle ending on the vertical midline of the rectangle and without halving the length of the triangle. The only points in a line are the lower left corner of the triangle and the bottom of the rectangle. The blue of course seems to change color as it narrows in the black. The black rectangle is not quite square with the white rectangle of the whole painting, which itself is not quite square. In the white area above the triangle is a small area painted out when it was wet (in the Stedelijk catalogue by Troels Anderson it is called a capital B). The black and the white are painted to a mostly covered pencil line. The black, probably painted second, is mixed into the white a little along the somewhat loose edge as if both colors were applied wet. The left edge of the black is sharp, as if it were changed after the white was dry. There are two sets of faint scratches in the white running diagonally out from the lower corners of the black area. The blue triangle is painted as if both the white and black had been dry. The blue is checked through to red where it's over the black, suggesting that perhaps it had been originally red within the black rectangle.

In *Supremus No. 50,* also 1915, a somewhat complex painting, the shapes are usually painted to a pencil line on the dry white background. A small purple square has been enlarged. Something has been painted out in the upper left without concern for the difference between the old white and the new. In *Suprematist Painting,* 1915, the shapes are also filled in over dry white; a trace of pencil line shows along the upper edge of the black square and along the left edge of the blue trapezoid. The white in all of these paintings is usually painted with a loose scumble, in a way to quickly cover a large area. The colored forms are painted in a flatter, tighter way, that of filling in a small area, with brushstrokes often parallel to the edges. The surfaces are practical but still look as if Malevich enjoyed painting them. Surface was important to him, since he mentions the independence of texture and surface, both relative to illusionistic depth.

Despite the white background and the shapes often being painted on dry white, and despite Malevich's talk of space and infinity, his Suprematist paintings are not very spatial. The two or several shapes are like pieces of paper on top of one another and on top of the white which is hardly more spatial. This is in contrast to the surface and space in Mondrian's paintings which is double: both flat as it appears to be, and then also rather deep. All painting until Pollock, Newman, Rothko and Still is more spatial than that of Malevich. Only Still and Kelly and especially Yves Klein and Stella are flatter, since a qualified equation can be made between the shallow space in front of the shapes of a frontal small painting, which acts as a window, and the space behind the shapes in frontal large paintings such as Pollock's.

Large rectangles and trapezoids are buried beneath the small volumes, representational parts and lettering of the later Cubist paintings, which Malevich sometimes called Futurist, such as *An Englishman in Moscow,* 1913-14. In *Woman at Poster Column,* 1914, two rectangles, one medium-sized, vertical and pink, and the other twice as large, horizontal and yellow and not square on the right, are painted right over the small Cubist parts. The two areas connect locally to the rest of the painting only by a black line extending slightly into the pink and by a black area repeating at a greater angle the angled side of the yellow. A purple and a blue area are painted fairly flatly, though overlapped by the Cubist elements, and a pink strip along the right edge is nearly free, only touching the recessed blue area. Color is less important in the Cubist paintings than in the "peasant" ones. In this painting, color is becoming independent, as are the two or three main flat shapes. In 1915, Malevich wrote of the independence of both color and form. He also wrote a whole essay in 1930 on the relation between color and form, which is sensible and thorough though sometimes complicated, as qualifications are given to previous qualifications. Malevich warns about the abstractness of the distinction between color and form and is careful to protect the "complicated creative process" against theory of any kind, and also against science, which may be useful but is "knowledge," not art. Color and form may change one another but a color doesn't have a form or a form a color. I think people still believe that color is less important than form and it's interesting to find in Malevich's writing and to see in *Woman at Poster Column* both aspects becoming clear at once. There's a lot of force to the desire for independent color and form.

The yellow, the two pinks, the blue and the purple in *Woman at Poster Column* are all colors of the same kind and of the same value, making a set. In *Taking in the Rye,* the ultramarine blue, the viridian and the two alizarins, one toward red and the other toward purple, form a set of intense, dark colors. The two alizarins are a pair, a split color, like the two pinks, one of which is rosy and one a little orange. These sets and contrasts, almost in the early paintings and completely as they become clear in the Suprematist paintings, are not harmonic, do not make a further overall color or tone. The blue, black and white of the painting with the blue triangle are unchangeably themselves; they can't combine; they can only make a set of three or any two in the way that three bricks make a set. In *Supremus No. 50* the red and black make the most obvious set, a pair in this case, since they are about equal in area. Size is a factor in relating the colors. The larger white ground and the two much smaller yellow squares are also part of the set because all are full color, simple, primary and, in a way, monochromatic when grouped. The difference in value in this case is as extreme as possible and yet is irrelevant to the set. A minute cerulean blue line under a large red one and the small purple square are colors from completely different schemes, the purple from one like that of *Woman at Poster Column*. These contrast but don't mix with the four "monochromatic" colors. In *Suprematist Painting* of 1916 a rectangle of cadmium red light adjoins a smaller rectangle of cadmium red medium. This contrast is greater in kind, since they are from different sets, than that between the cadmium red medium and the black, yellow, green and blue areas. A light pink trapezoid is again from a set like that in the *Woman at Poster Column*. The two whites of the white paintings are pairs like any two colors from *Woman at Poster Column*. Autonomous color is still full of possibilities, for example, Flavin's use of two adjacent tubes of contrasting white light.

There's a gap between such paintings as *Woman at Poster Column* and the first Suprematist paintings. The gap was possibly crossed visually by designs for the opera *Victory Over the Sun*. With hindsight the real crossing seems logical but actually I think it's mysterious, incredible and awesome.

> The intuitive, it seems to me, should reveal itself in forms which are unconscious and without response.
> The intuitive form should emerge from nothing.
> In the same way that reason, which creates things for everyday life, takes them from nothing and perfects them. The square is not a subconscious form.
> It is the creation of intuitive reason.

The common requirement of independent surface, color and form is that they occur upright and flat. The three aspects generally develop together, though irregularly, one forcing another further. The depiction of perspective and volume makes it impossible to have an independent surface, since surface must follow the tilt of the perspective toward the top of the picture and the curves of the volumes everywhere. Color must be diluted to agree with perspective and must be shaded to show volume, occurring full strength only in a narrow strip. Form has nothing to do with the depiction of objects, so when it is used to depict objects it must be crumpled to fit and forced away from the plane of the painting. The free rectangles in *Woman at Poster Column* are already vertical, flat, aligned with the rectangle of the painting itself and positioned in relation to it. The *Black Square* then probably came from thinking about the white upright square of canvas and so is a second plane within the first. The unchanged white, either canvas or painted, might have suggested black, making the first Suprematist colors. "The plane, forming a square, was the source of Suprematism, new color realism, as nonobjective creation." The black square could be centered or slid up and down and sideways within and parallel to the white square. This consideration of the whole rectangle of the painting is important and familiar now. The square is placed in relation to only that one other shape and so isn't composed traditionally. If this is composition it's single-shot composition. Malevich objects to traditional composition but doesn't attack it as often as he does the subservience of surface, color and form. Perhaps he doesn't regard composition or the lack of it as such a distinct problem as he does the other aspects.

Both Malevich's simple and complex paintings are obscured somewhat by similar later work by other artists, the first because they are so familiar and their assumptions are so basic, and the second because they are unfamiliar and historical, related to such work as Kandinsky's rigid geometric paintings. Despite the many parts in the complex paintings, the quality of traditional composition is not very strong. The composition is newer and unlike Cubist composition, which is directly derived from traditional composition. So far, most work having many parts, mainly sculpture, is still derived from Cubist composition, an amalgam of connected fragments going into space. Malevich's forms are placed as whole and discrete shapes. His composition of whole shapes is somewhat like that of Serra's large irregular sculptures. Some ideas in his complex Suprematist paintings are abstracted from old composition, such as the two small triangles pointing in opposite directions in *Suprematist No. 50,* though these are novel even so since they are alone and distant on the white ground. The most common new structure in the complex paintings is the group of parallel long rectangles, either straight or without parallel sides or angled away from the general parallel. The four long red rectangles, all like strips of paper, in *Supremus No. 50* are an example. Two black strips of very different size, an idea that occurs frequently, underlie the red rectangles and form an X, which itself is very different in kind from the parallel reds. The difference in size becomes extreme with the minute triad of yellow and two cerulean blue lines underneath one red rectangle. In *Eight Red Rectangles,* the shapes are all laid flat side by side along a diagonal axis. In *Suprematist Painting*, 1916, most of the shapes follow a diagonal slightly off that of the painting. A large long black rectangle lies horizontally and under the prevailing parallel group, part of which is a large blue square, overlying a long thin red line which lies over the black, all of which is very nice. There are some exceptions, none extreme, to the flat plane and the simple placement and grouping. In *Football Match*, 1915, a parallelogram and a trapezoid slant away from the plane, and the diminution of the shapes toward the top suggests distance. In the painting in which the yellow trapezoid slants and shades into the surrounding white, Malevich is evidently trying to get around his usual thinking and also learn something from the recent white paintings with shaded forms, which he called "aerial Suprematism," and which he later critized. The single, flat, fine crosses follow these paintings.

> And that moment when the idealization of form took hold of them [the Greeks and Romans] should be considered the downfall of real art.
> For art should not proceed towards reduction, or simplification, but towards complexity.

The paintings by Malevich are not quite so particular in quality, as "complex" as, say, those by Mondrian and Matisse. His best work was done in a few years; for his reasons and because of the Russian Revolution he didn't develop it further. The paintings are sure but there are none that have a settled sureness, that are casually great. Malevich associated what he thought were radical politics with his radical art, accepting an idealism and generalization which he wouldn't have accepted in his art, and excitedly supported the Revolution. He taught and wrote and tried to interest his society in his ideas. As usual that society didn't think they were interesting and finally thought they were useless, even threatening. Malevich was arrested in 1927 for going to Berlin. Of course two political forces capable of maintaining a war are bound to be similar. Malevich's work is the most nearly nonobjective, for lack of a better word, of any until recently. There's not much in the work that shows his fantasy about industry and flying, which gets most fantastic in the '20s, after most of his Suprematist paintings. His work is more radical than Mondrian's, for example, which has a considerable idealistic quality and which has an ultimately anthropomorphic, if "abstract," composition of high and low, right and left. Art doesn't change in sequence. By now there is work and controversy many times over within the context Malevich established.

Addenda

Arts Yearbook 8, 1965

To Encourage Sculpture
The Howard and Jean Lipman Collection

First, I want to fend off one of the implications of describing and praising a collector and his collection. I don't think that the present financial arrangements for art are good. They are better than they were twenty years ago, but they aren't sufficient. I especially don't want to imply that money for art should come only as it nearly does, through purchases from galleries by collectors and museums. The market shouldn't be the only source of money. It will always be a major source and should become a large market, but it shouldn't decide whether an artist can live and work or not. An artist should be able to work whether or not anyone wants to buy his work. Art is an activity in its own right, not an adjunct to its business or to business generally. Somehow art should have its own money and the artists should control it. No artist now can help another very much. None can do much to help art as a whole. The galleries and museums are run by laymen. There should be something else.

Howard Lipman and his collection are fine. I'm glad he's interested in art. He's seriously interested and he's knowledgeable. As far as I know I agree with his thinking and activities. Mr. Lipman likes the work he buys. He's not careless or glib and omnivorous, and he's not a follower. The quality of his interest seems pretty rare to me.

The collection is limited to American sculpture. Until the late forties Mr. Lipman was a part-time sculptor and is of course especially interested in sculpture. The collection is American because he wants to know what is happening and wants to be able to encourage developments that he likes. If you live in New York, you can learn of new things in Europe some time after they are common knowledge there — just as Europeans learn of things here. Mr. Lipman's wish to see and buy work that is being done now is a wish that artists have always recommended. Obviously artists want money in the present, but they also want their work to be seen and bought in an approximation of the way it was made, at the least as a single thing by one man and without sanctions. If a collector has to wait five, ten or fifty years for everyone else's approval and a guarantee of the price, he isn't interested in a sculpture or a painting in any way that was intended by the artist. Certainly investment should not be a major concern. Since Mr. Lipman eventually gives many of the pieces away, investment doesn't matter to him.

The collection was begun in 1955. About six years ago the Howard W. Lipman Foundation, Inc., was formed, dividing the collection into two parts, now entitled the Howard and Jean Lipman Collection and the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc., Mrs. Lipman is the Editor of *Art in America*. Their personal collection has about seventy pieces in it, and the Foundation collection about forty pieces. The seventy pieces are in their home and garden in Cannondale, Connecticut, in their apartment in New York and in Mr. Lipman's office. He is a stockbroker with the firm of Neuberger and Berman.

Before 1950 they had collected some three hundred pieces of folk art—weather vanes, trade signs, cigar-store Indians—which are now in the New York Historical Association collection at Cooperstown, N.Y. Mr. Lipman says that he didn't have enough money to collect sculpture before the early fifties — weather vanes in the thirties were some ten dollars apiece — and also that there was a good deal less sculpture in the United States then. He may not have been as closely interested in contemporary sculpture as he is now, but his own sculpture shows a fairly live interest in it. Mr. Lipman wrote in the catalogue to his last exhibition, in 1948 at the Smith Art Museum in Springfield, Massachusetts:

"I have learned from Brancusi, from African and American folk sculpture, perhaps from Calder; and though only recently having become acquainted with Moore's work I feel that he has achieved in monumental scale a great many of my humbler aims.

"The relationships of solid masses—the play of light through open spaces — the rhythms of a curve—these are things that bring life out of a block wood, and I enjoy exploring such aspects of design."

"To develop a solid mass, then contrast it with the softness and shadows of a hollow, to point up the delicacy of a curve with the stability and sureness of a straight surface — these are the kind of sculptural relationships I find exciting."

The sculpture isn't remarkable, as Mr.

Lipman knows, since he says that he gave it up because he wasn't good enough; but, as his remarks would suggest, the forms and relationships are convincing, and the sculpture is good as far as it goes.

I disagree with the choice of a couple of artists in the collection but think that most are the best there are. A good piece by David Smith, done in 1961, stands in the apartment; the end of a boiler painted cream and white surmounts an upright angular section painted light blue — apparently lacquer brushed on. Also in the apartment are a gold relief and a black relief by Louise Nevelson, and a four-by-four-foot relief by Lee Bontecou, done in 1960. There are quite a few pieces in the apartment: two small works by Lucas Samaras; two of Calder's mobiles, a fish done about 1950 and several other works of his; two of Oldenburg's plaster reliefs; two of George Ortman's later, fairly flat reliefs; a piece by Bob Morris; a model for Lippold's piece at Lincoln Center; a sphere by Robert Bart; and *The Evil New War God* by H. C. Westermann. There are new sculptures by Mark di Suvero and David von Schlegell. On the grounds at Cannondale are two Calder stabiles eight feet high, a sculpture by Noguchi and two by Hadzi; a Rickey is yet to be delivered. In the office there are pieces by Calder, Stankiewicz, Lipton, Tom Lloyd and Bob Morris, among others.

Mr. Lipman isn't interested in a large personal collection. He says that he wants to buy sculpture, enjoy it and pass it on. "I am not interested in owning things; I'm interested in encouraging young sculptors." For several years he has been giving work to museums, and more to colleges and universities—Colby College, Wellesley College, the Wadsworth Atheneum, the University of Missouri. The Foundation now plans to work with the Whitney Museum. Sculpture will be given to the Museum, as well as funds that will enable some of it to be sent to other museums and to colleges and universities. Some pieces will be selected by the Whitney for its permanent collection, and about thirty will be chosen for a circulating exhibition. The Foundation plans a continuous working relationship with the Whitney.

Mr. Lipman is a director of the Friends of the Whitney Museum. He is also National Trustee and Secretary of the Archives of American Art. He knew David Smith and has arranged for the documentation of his papers. After Smith's death last spring, Mr. Lipman had Ugo Mulas, who took the pictures of the Voltri-Bolton sculpture, photograph all of the work at Bolton Landing. Part of Calder's papers are already preserved by the Archives, and Mr. Lipman is interested in a program of securing the documentary material of American sculptors for the Archives of American Art.

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*The title is not mine.

Arts Magazine, Feb. 1967

To the Editor:
Smithson isn't my spokesman.

Don Judd
New York City

Letter to Irving Sandler in reference to the panel at the College Art Association 1973

24 January, 1973

Irving:

There wasn't enough time to write anything developed on politics. More or less I'll answer your questions. Naturally I hoped that McGovern would win and even voted for him. I couldn't stand either Nixon or Humphrey. I didn't expect McGovern to win, but there's always a chance. Nixon is the same now as he's always been. The main thing is that the United States government is the same now as it's always been. If McGovern had won things might have been two or three percentage points better and you have to vote for two or three points. But I don't see how anyone can be enthusiastic about McGovern or any candidate backed by either of the two parties. In New York City, with the Lindsay administration and with the art museums you learn that liberals are only .05 better than conservatives. They smile sometimes. Anyway the office of the President of the United States is archaic. I don't suppose things are worse now than they have been all along; they've always been grim. I grew up on World War II and just missed it and the Korean War. The U.S. has always had lots of poor people supporting rich wars. It's supposedly a rich country but if you drive around through the small towns and the cities you wonder

October 1975

Imperialism, Nationalism and Regionalism

Most of the present beliefs should be dead beliefs, but, contrary to my old expectations, they'll take a thousand years to die. And then new stupidities will have filled the emptied space. It's hard to believe but in the last few years among some artists and critics there's been a revival of nationalism. More and more, art that is made in the United States is called American art. People who like it tend to give the country credit; those who don't blame it on the obnoxiousness of the United States. I gather by hearsay, since I can't stand to read his articles, that Max Kozloff lays the so-called rise of American art to the rise of American power after World War II. I've come across that opinion, and the allied one that art done in New York City and the United States is imperialistic, in Australia, Canada, the Netherlands and Italy. Also Columbus, Houston, St. Louis, Minneapolis, Richmond, Kansas City and Portland agree that art done in New York City is imperialistic.

Only religion is more primitive than nationalism. But most religion has become tepid. Nationalism, along with its fake international systems, capitalism and communism, is the real religion. It's the worst fully live and unquestioned force in the world. The nation is very much taken for granted. An instance of this, over a hundred years old, but things haven't changed, is that after Alexander Herzen supported the Polish revolt from Russia in 1863, the Russian readership of his magazine *The Bell,* all of them certainly for social reform, dropped from a couple of thousand to five hundred. Historians describe the unification of the nations only in terms of progress. But that's just that the unification of one nation forces the unification of another. The first nation becomes more powerful and efficient: better at war. Then an adjoining area has to resist and do the same. This doesn't benefit the people and primarily it has made possible the greatest organization and oppression and even killing of people ever. The people aren't much smarter now than they were a couple of hundred years ago in their small areas and yet the operations and technology of governments have become enormous. The people can't resist such power or question it. When the Scots were cleared from the Highlands by their chiefs, with the advice of the clergy and the threats of the English, they left their homes quietly. They were docile toward eviction by a local authority. Their descendants would resist that now but they and the descendants of the various other cultures, having broadened their thinking, are just as docile toward the big governments. The attitudes of both the governed and the governors are old. The governors are as ruthless and expansionist as ever, but with new means. Maybe Scotland will secede.

The world would be a lot better off if Germany had never become unified. Its neighbor France is one of the original strong nations. The revolution there and Napoleon's regime are Europe's first example of totalitarianism. Louis the XIV was just a beginning. The people in Germany or in any country felt part of their town or county in a fairly normal way. They were made to feel part of larger and larger units and the larger the units became the more passionate the people had to be about them. The less they knew and the less the unit concerned them the stronger their feelings had to be, like religion. Russia, which showed this century's nations what was possible, as France did those of the nineteenth century, is unified at the expense of at least fifty-three other countries: fifteen Union Republics, twenty Autonomous Republics, eight Autonomous Regions, and ten National Areas. There are eighty different peoples. Its unification is a calamity. The United States might now be a reasonable country if the Confederacy had won and left or if Mexico had won and kept its land. It would even help if the Republic of Texas hadn't joined. Thank goodness for Canada and what's left of Mexico. Since everyone is trying to learn to be nationalistic, the two present monsters are eventually going to be staring up at India and China. Since it takes a couple of hundred years to make all the citizens true patriots and since India and China will have to fight it out with Russia and the United States and a couple of new amalgamations and then since India and China will have to fight, it's easy to see that nationalism will last a thousand years. And, as with the European religious wars, it will be hard to understand what it was all about. It will just have happened and millions, maybe billions will be dead.

Protestantism and Catholicism played about the same role for the beginning nations in those wars that capitalism and communism do for the present nations in these wars. The international doctrines give the nations room to maneuver in, give them a cover-up for each nation's self-interest and an objective aspect for the people's patriotism—God and Country. Any real international idea or effort, such as the United Nations partly was, is cooperatively reduced to a farce. It's interesting that one of the UN organizations you hear most about is UNESCO; art is the one thing Russia and the United States can agree upon since it doesn't involve anything they take seriously. Science, on the other hand, is far less international than it was in the nineteenth century, before the nations realized it was so valuable. Art has always been comparatively international within Europe. It was intentionally international in the United States after World War II. Now some artists and critics want to be part of the thousand years of nationalism.

The importance of art done in the United States since World War II (and the change started in the late thirties) is most easily explained by saying that a few artists simply decided to do first-rate work. This argument isn't so convincing to a lot of people because it leaves this great historical event up to a few individuals. An argument more on their level is that the United States was the only place not bombed to death. The present international art is mostly "Western", it has a European history, so you couldn't expect much from the few places not in the war. Europe has tried to commit suicide twice; it's not surprising that the art there didn't revive soon after World War II. Russia was destroyed, in addition to having a horrible government that had already finished off its artists. Australia and Canada and other undamaged countries with small populations are too small, given the contemporary ratio, to have many good artists. After all, in the United States there are only a handful of excellent artists to two hundred million people. India, which was not damaged, is not a "Western" country, which is something I'll mention later. China isn't "Western", continued to fight, and is anyway the purest example of God and Country. The prevailing adulation of China by many artists and some other intellectuals is very odd since the country is Nixon's dream come true, with nothing left but the American Legion. And China took Tibet and destroyed its civilization.

The second social reason is that while the artists in the United States were poor, the society had enough money to allow them to scrape by, to make a choice to be artists. You can't be an artist facing plain starvation, but if you can be poor and get by on brief jobs, you can work. The third big social reason is that while the United States is hardly free and democratic, it's sloppy, and no one is going to stop you from doing something as irrelevent as art. Certainly no government, city, state or federal, supported art until recently. The W.P.A. wasn't much. If you come in contact with the governments, usually through taxes, certainly not through participation, they are hostile. New York State summoned me once to question my deduction of art materials as a second business loss when I was making about $1700 a year at part-time jobs. At any rate, in terms of money and freedom artists could and still can live in the cracks between the blocks of the society of the United States.

Art is a peripheral activity, almost outside of the society of the United States. I felt that I had to leave that society to be an artist. It was too wrong to deal with. If people can't see that art isn't imperialistic, they should understand from the social and economic conditions that the artists of the forties and fifties could hardly be agents of the government. In 1965 at the São Paulo Bienal Barnett Newman was told by the wife of the American Ambassador to Brazil that his work and that of the others shouldn't have been sent. They should have sent Andrew Wyeth's. And usually they do; you just don't hear about it. As proof of the intentions of the best artists of the forties and fifties here's Pollock's statement again, dated 1944:

> "The idea of an isolated American painting, so popular in this country during the thirties, seems absurd to me, just as the idea of creating a purely American mathematics or physics would seem absurd . . . And in another sense, the problem doesn't exist at all; or, if it did, would solve itself: An American is an American and his painting would naturally be qualified by that fact, whether he wills it or not. But the basic problems of contemporary painting are independent of any one country."

In the forties and even in the fifties art magazines in the United States worried about whether art made there could equal art made in Europe. Art magazines in Europe ignored or despised art made in the United States. The talk about Wols being better than Pollock, even influencing him, is an example. Like a lot of problems, this problem of whether first-rate art can be made anyplace can simply be declared dead. Those bothered by that problem are looking for the spirit of where they live and of course they can't find it. If there were such a thing no artist could live in New York City. Its visible seediness and malevolence is nothing compared to what's in the minds of its bureaucracy.

An excellent artist has to know the work of older excellent artists as the person's own work is being formed. It's a case of knowledge. There's a lot of art and a lot of artists in New York. But not all of either and most of the artists have come from somewhere else. Also most well-known artists leave New York after a while since the place is so disagreeable. There's nothing mysterious about New York. It's just that the knowledge and a lot of the art business are there. The city itself and the people who live there aren't interested in art. They buy less than St. Louis or Minneapolis or Milan or Cologne. It's unfortunate that art has become so centered in New York but it's been dispersing for ten years and should continue to do so. It's true to form that the accusation of imperialism occurs after the time of the greatest real activity in New York. It's another instance of the tourists talking to each other. Provincialism is in the minds of the provincials; there are probably more of them too in New York than anywhere else. It's the world's greatest producer of fresh schmaltz.

Art made in two centers or in many will still be an international art. The main reason is that art is fairly congruent with the state of knowledge, which is chiefly science. I'm appalled by art that romanticizes science or otherwise incorporates it, falsifying it, making further solipsistic art, such as Smithson's work and some of Morris', but I think good art cannot contradict what's known at the time it's made. If it does it's just ignorant. Despite the attempts of the nations to divide science, knowledge is knowledge and art has to deal with that. I think good earlier art from all societies was made according to what they thought true. Instead of the world having lots of truths, religions at the time, it's been reduced to one truth, science, such as it is.

The social reasons for an international art aren't as determining as science, which is a barrier to the past. The most important, most given social reason is that the majority of people in the industrial nations are more alike than they are different. They all have some sort of rural and religious background one or two generations back, which they play with some, but they work in the same factories and offices, have the same amount of vague education, and live in the same awful houses and apartments with the same awful furniture. Their grandparents were removed, usually willingly, from a particular place, where there was some local culture, always including a religion. The present people don't believe what their grandparents believed. But they don't believe much that's new either. Mostly they fill up the space with ideas like nationalism. These industrialized, mostly middle-class people can't go back to the farm. They don't have much of a past. So the few people among them who want to do something, who don't like the thoughtlessness, have to invent their own interests. They can only go ahead.

Art is already international; it exists as such, with the exception of course of the surviving older cultures. All of the industrial nations — I haven't been to Japan — that produced little or no excellent art in the nineteenth century and the beginning of this one have the same pictures in their museum stacks and on their museum walls. I've seen hundreds of paintings each from that time from Sweden, the United States, Canada and Australia and I'm not impressed by the differences. The differences were among artists in France and Germany. There are often some nice painters you've never heard of and the landscape and architecture add a few differences but those aren't enough. At present the art in countries which have no excellent artists only reflects what's going on in the United States and Europe. A critic in Adelaide, Australia complained that the show "Some Recent American Art", an unfortunate title, which the Museum of Modern Art sent there in 1974, wasn't necessary because:

> ". . . it will be composed entirely of conceptual and minimal art with which we are already familiar through the work of local imitators."

At least he said imitators. Another critic thought the show simply a duplication. Australia has faded versions of all the well-known artists. So does the United States. The show was said to be an instance of cultural imperialism, the Museum of Modern Art was described as an agent of the United States Government and of the Rockefellers. But you should learn if you live in New York a while that the Modern isn't very interested in contemporary art, doesn't do much, doesn't have a lot of money, which it would have if the government thought art was useful for imperialism, and that the Rockefellers aren't much interested in contemporary art. I'm saying that a lot of people, elsewhere and in New York, are being very careless and ignorant in their accusations. Dan Flavin was scolded by the Art Workers Coalition a few years back because the fluorescent tubes he used were made by a company that made something for the Vietnam War. It all gets silly. Flavin pointed out that the most common toilet was made by a company that also supplied something for the War. I don't like being accused of being an agent of the United States Government, New York State and New York City simply because I live there. And I visit New York now; I left legally because it was so awful. I don't like being lectured by doctrinaire artists, who are fortifying their work with politics, about situations I've lived with all my life and learned about angrily detail by detail. Do you remember when the United States wanted to attack Yugoslavia for shooting down a plane?

As I said, it would be useful if the countries split into their cultural entities and I'm interested in what's left of the various cultures. But I'm not part of any of those cultures nor of any religion, unless I'm part of the industrialized middle class, which seems too empty to be a culture, but is one of course, a lousy one. The industrial nations, in their left and right versions, have tried to kill off local cultures. Even Franz Fanon says:

> We must take advantage of the national military and civil service in order to raise the level of the national consciousness, and to detribalize and unite the nation.
>
> What can be dangerous is when they reach the stage of social consciousness before the stage of nationalism. If this happens, we find in under-developed countries fierce demands for social justice which paradoxically are allied with often primitive tribalism.
>
> The collective building up of a destiny is the assumption of responsibility on the historical scale. Otherwise there is anarchy, repression, and the resurgence of tribal parties and federalism.

"Fierce demands for social justice . . . allied with . . . tribalism" sounds just fine to me. "Destiny" is a manifest myth, another excuse for cheating someone, say Mexico. The suppression of local cultures has to stop. Whatever unaffiliated people like myself think of the old beliefs, the cultures should be left alone. The problem is very serious. The difference between the people in a live old-fashioned culture and those in the industrial one is irreconciliable. The people in the old culture don't know about or don't care about such things as science and, having been kicked around a lot, dislike the rest of the world. The unaffiliated people who have become independent are bound to consider the earlier culture tight and, since it is religious, pretty ignorant. It's possible the world will develop some kinds of diversity that are not contradictory but it's not going to happen soon. In the meantime the contradictions should be tolerated.

In solving a problem, an individual should join with another person or several only as a last resort. They should join a somewhat larger group in the same way and so on out to towns, counties, and states or provinces. At no point should the power exceed what is necessary to solve the problems at that point. This is hardly the case now. And at no time should the group or institution become mysterious or moral, something greater than the problems it was created to solve. This isn't the case either. The attitude of the officials of the United States, New York State and New York City and of most institutions is very moral and personal. They act like a laird on his land but they have the capacity to bomb Russia for being so sassy. They are pretty primitive. Toynbee, who the *Times* today says died yesterday, is a good example of the preposterous generality and morality of the thought of the rulers. The rulers don't know what they don't know. Local control has to develop: the people have to take the power. But this is politics and economics, not art and science. For local control all you need is a place, political say and a way to make a living; it's a practical matter. For local art you need a whole culture. If the local control is more than practical it becomes dangerous, becomes mysterious and moral and overwhelming, like the present governments.

Just as no one should give up power to a larger organization except as a necessity, power should not be imposed by large organizations upon smaller ones or individuals except as a necessity. Clear examples of the necessary and the unnecessary uses of broad power are respectively of the desegregation of schools and of busing. Segregation was an outrage and wasn't going to stop. Children in the same neighborhood or town could not go to the same school. It was an insult. The Federal Government had to intervene and desegregate the schools. Busing, in contrast, is a typical liberal imposition. It's a typical admonishment and correction of the lower class by the middle and upper classes. The children and the schools are being used to correct the much broader problem of separate neighborhoods, caused primarily by intimidation but also somewhat by choice. Busing doesn't solve that problem. And it's a violation of geography, practicality and local control. The people whose children are bused elsewhere feel pushed around and it only increases their antagonism. The only changes in the society that will stick are those that convince people. The government seldom changes: it settled easily into thirty years of cold war. But the people, who have an ancient hostile attitude to outsiders, which, with more scope and circumspection, the government officials also have, are supposed to change rapidly. It may take the government forever to make a decision, but once it's made it sends in the troops. And when the troops leave the supposed reform collapses.

This article is pretty general, so, to add another general statement, the world is usually thought of and felt as a whole in ways I don't agree with and also divided in ways I don't agree with. As I wrote several years ago I'm very wary of general statements, certainly the usual solipsistic ones, and also I'm wary of my own. The different kinds of activities should become discrete, should be considered only as a function if useful and only as knowledge if that's the purpose. Art, dance, music and literature have to be considered as autonomous activities and not as decoration upon political and social purposes. Only in China and Russia is it still 1935. One thing this separation of activities means is that business should be considered only as production and supply and divested of its great aura of moral, social and political assumptions. I'm tired of being governed by the men who produce my oil, the children's milk or move the products around. When Brooklyn was seized by Manhattan one of the arguments in favor of that was that a single sewage and water system would be more efficient. A city disappeared and the people's political power was reduced for the sake of a couple of functions. Greater separation obviously doesn't mean that those doing one thing should be more ignorant of others' activities. That's one of the present troubles and one of the causes of moralizing and of trying to make activities serve purposes outside of themselves or even harmful to them. Science for example is seriously abused by the governments, mostly for fancier wars, and its whole course is warped by the great support supplied for that purpose and by the little supplied for plain old knowledge.

Most moralizing occurs in the extension of personal feeling into institutions. For instance, a violent reaction if a person is attacked is justified; there's no reason to be personally pacific. But governments and institutions shouldn't be interested in violence and revenge. Those aren't practical. Organizations shouldn't have feelings. They are, or should, be made over a long period of time in an objective way by numerous people in order to perform certain functions. The function is built in. Most institutions of the governments are highly subjective, with feelings such as the prevailing "overkill" attitude; and the built in function is violence. The institutions are built according to feelings that should be personal. They'd be just as nuts if they were built for love, as some of Christianity was.

Competent art made in a place should be shown in that place. It's absurd to always import art, even from New York to Buffalo. But the work should be shown as simply being done there, as a practical matter, without a lot of nonsense about the spirit of the place. There's no doubt local art is insufficiently supported; certainly New York City doesn't do anything. But it's still a case of knowledge and the best art has to be seen and for most of the world that means it comes from New York and secondly from Europe. The main job of the staff of a museum is to make judgements about the quality of the various artists' work and to defend those judgements. The true proportion of quality among the various artists has to be maintained. It becomes a real mess when no one knows the difference between a good artist and a bad one, as they didn't, say, in 1959 between Rauschenberg and Michael Goldberg or Grace Hartigan. Or say now between Richard Long and Daniel Buren or Jan Dibbets.

Another confusion is the application of political democracy to art. Everyone should be equal politically. But they're not equal in what they do, especially artists. Art is done by people who like it and are good at it and they are few. It's not something done by several thousand hacks with jobs and pensions. It's not the same as some useful activity done by thousands of people. I don't see why art should be a guaranteed career. I think an artist should be as independent of the surrounding society as possible and should be ready to be poor, as artists have been in the United States until recently. Naturally it's better to make a living from art and it takes money to make work.

As I wrote earlier, the international art within Europe became international art. There's no doubt present art developed primarily from European art and within Europe and in the colonies settled by Europeans. Japan is the only country not European that has contemporary international art, proving it can be done. The main qualification to the dominance of Europe is that for a century the art of other periods and civilizations has been liked and used by the Europeans and the erstwhile Europeans. I hope my work, for example, is international and not European, but I know of course that it's not Indian or Chinese or African. But I thought about the art from those places, and I thought about it almost as much as I thought about old European art. There are some common characteristics of American art and there are some of European and of Japanese art. The proximity of the artists accounts for most of these characteristics. Very little in recent American art came from the United States, and that came from earlier American art. It's one of the many art historical clichés that the place is responsible for common characteristics. Art history is one of the world's most unexamined activities. Like the government, it has a lot of information and procedure balanced on assumptions no one ever questions and probably no one ever formulated. India, China and Africa will probably bring a little from their traditional cultures, just as Europe and Japan did. None of these possible differences will be nearly as great as the differences between present artists making good work.